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EDITOR'S LETTER



No visit to Britain is complete without a trip to Windsor Castle, the weekend home of HM The Queen,

who recently celebrated becoming our longest-reigning monarch, but as we discover, there's so much more to *Royal Berkshire* (p6) besides its riverside palace.

Talking of impressive buildings, in *Grand Designs* (p22) we celebrate some of our nation's most fascinating and beautiful stately homes and we promise you, you're in for a treat.

As the cold nights draw in there's nothing we like better than escaping to an old inn with a roaring fire, comfy armchair and winter warmer, and we have some gorgeously tempting places for you to choose from in *Cosy Cotswold Hideaways* (p43) that are perfect for a weekend escape.

This month we're delighted to say that author and historian Alison Weir has shared some of the findings from her recent book on Margaret Douglas, the woman some thought should have been Queen of England in *The Lost Tudor Princess* (p53), and with murder, scandal and intrigue aplenty, it makes for riveting reading.

Sally Coffey, Editor

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No visit to Britain is complete without a trip to Windsor Castle, the weekend home of HM The Queen,

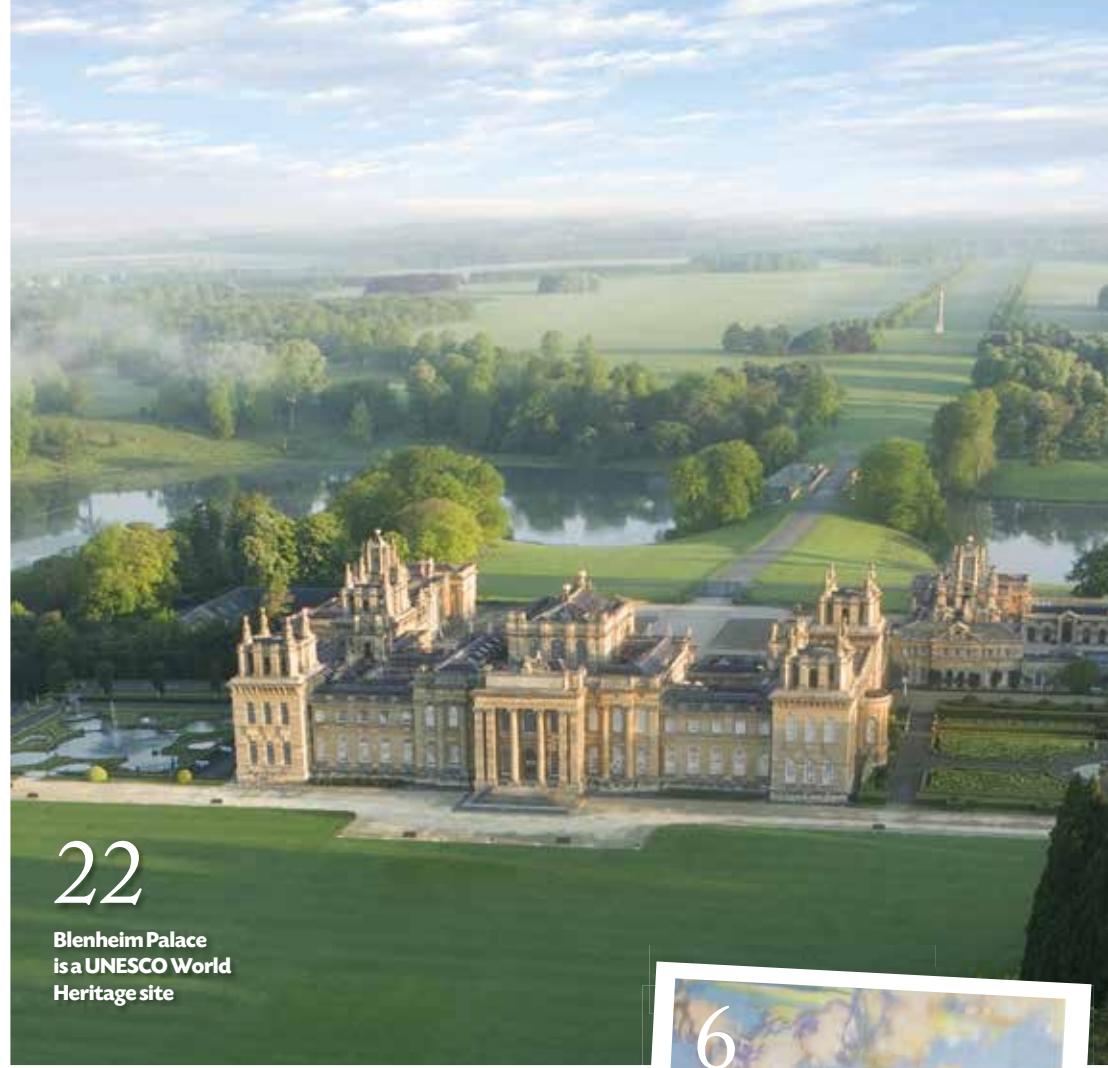
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Blenheim Palace
is a UNESCO World
Heritage site

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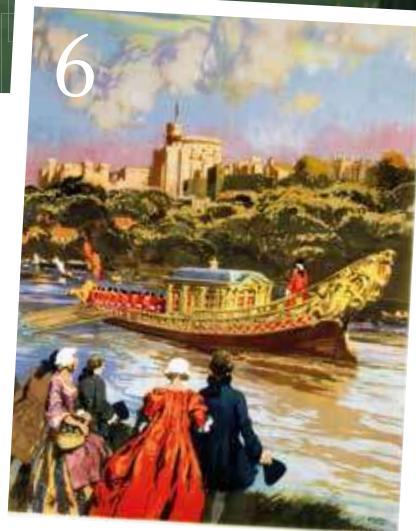
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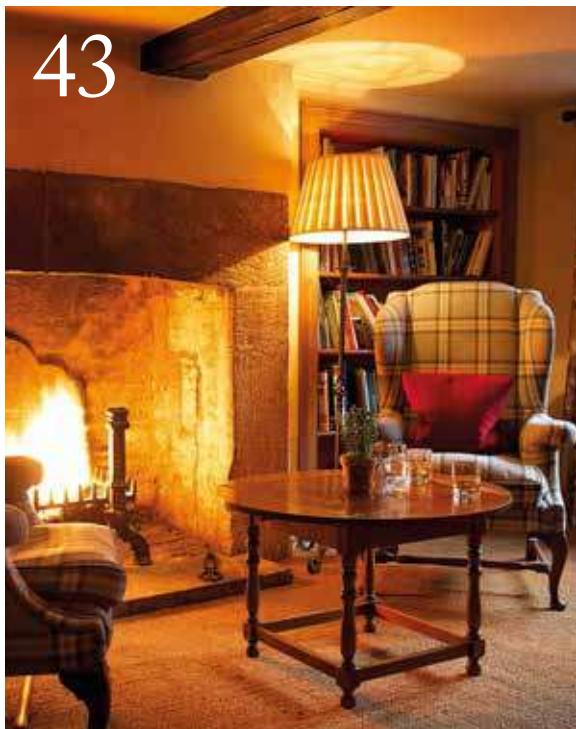
From Cromwell's favourite retreat to the home of a scandalous society beauty, check into one of Britain's Cotswold inns this winter for roaring log fires, antique furnishings, sumptuous food and other festive trimmings

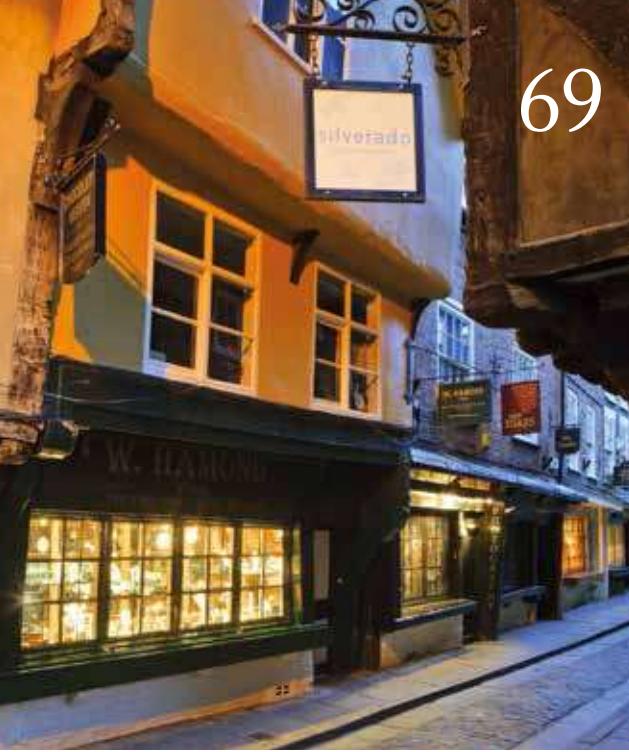
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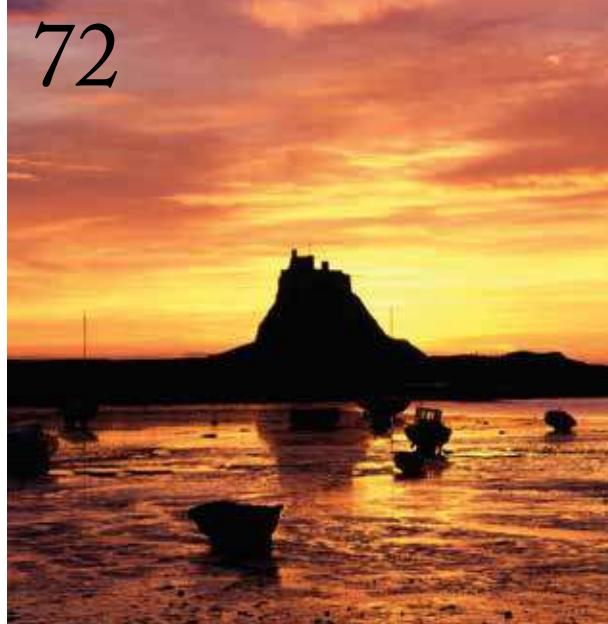
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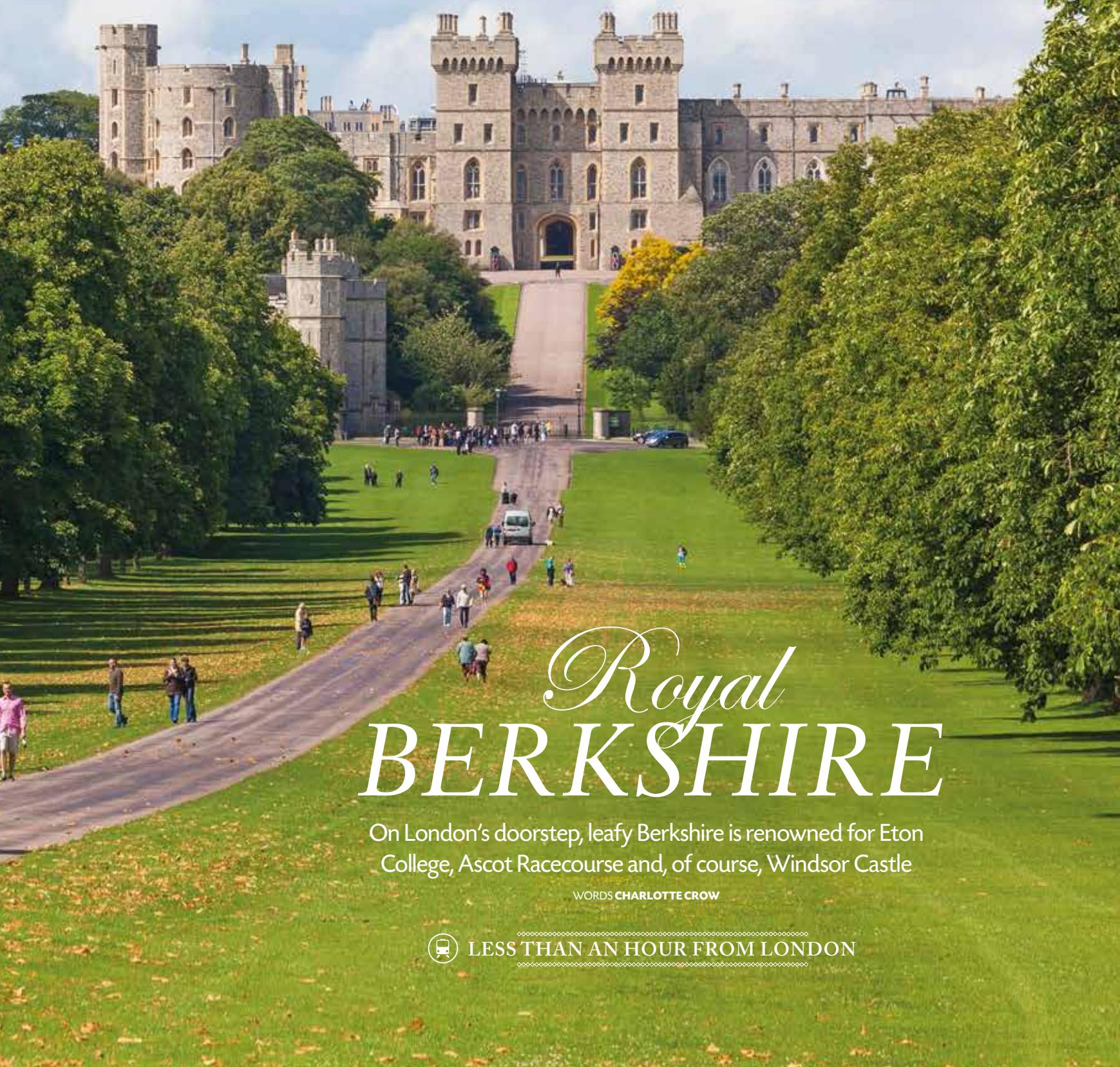
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Royal BERKSHIRE

On London's doorstep, leafy Berkshire is renowned for Eton College, Ascot Racecourse and, of course, Windsor Castle

WORDS CHARLOTTE CROW



LESS THAN AN HOUR FROM LONDON



*H*ere today, up and off to somewhere else tomorrow! Travel, change, interest, excitement. The whole world before you, and a horizon that's always changing!" What better words to hasten you to Berkshire than those of Mr Toad? For the county that inspired *The Wind in the Willows*, Kenneth Grahame's classic riverbank tale of 1908, offers its own realm of adventure, discovery and contrast, whether approached by water, rail or road.

Tranquil riverside, scenic hills, romantic woodland and historic villages characterise this attractive and prosperous county. As you head out west from London, few sights can compare with the majestic outline of Windsor Castle, silhouetted against the sky. From its eastern edge, at the Royal Borough of Windsor, to its most westerly town, Hungerford, is only an hour's drive, with the M4 providing speedy access between them.

Berkshire's royal associations date back to the establishment of Windsor Castle by William the Conqueror in the 11th century. The oldest (and largest) occupied castle in the world saw King John ride out from its walls to sign Magna Carta at nearby Runnymede in



Surrey in 1215. Today the private apartments at Windsor are still HM The Queen's preferred weekend retreat from the capital; her presence is signified by the Royal Standard flying from the Round Tower.

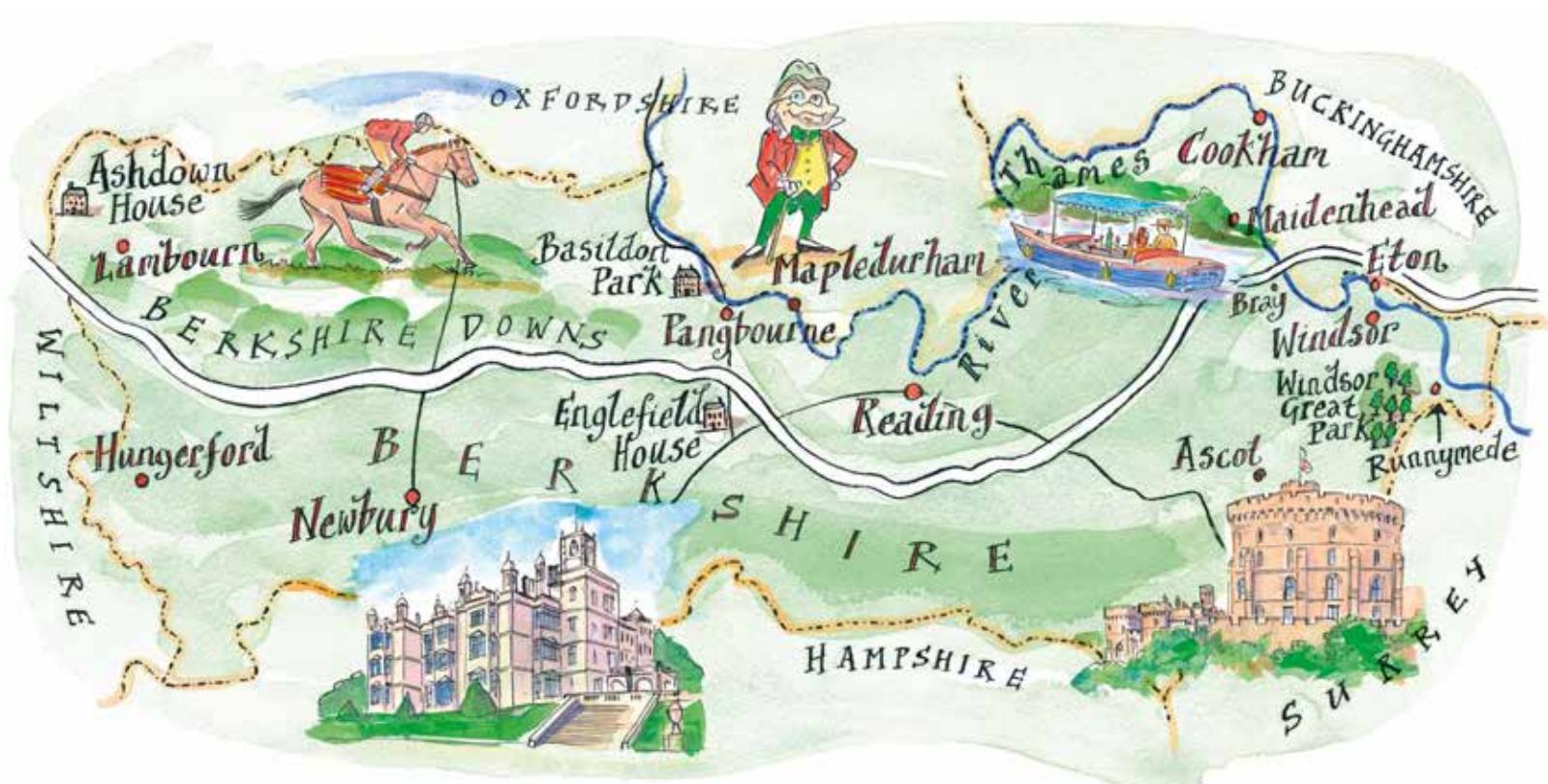
Once boot-shaped, Berkshire lost its northern reaches to Oxfordshire when its boundaries were redrawn in 1974. The county now stretches horizontally between Wiltshire,

Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey and Hampshire. To the northwest the chalky Berkshire Downs and villages Lambourn and Pangbourne (where the Duchess of Cambridge went to school) are within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Berkshire was of strategic importance during the English Civil Wars, spanning the distance between the Royalist headquarters at Oxford and the Parliamentarian army in London. Crucial battles took place at Reading and Newbury. Legend has it that on 27 October 1644, while dressing for battle in at nearby Shaw House, King Charles I narrowly cheated death from a Parliamentarian bullet. A plaque framing the bullet hole marks the spot.

Ultimately the monarchy survived, of course, and 200 years later in the 1850s, Berkshire's strong associations

Clockwise, from top left: Eton boys in traditional tailcoats; the ancient riverside villages of Goring and Streatley have been a popular holiday destination since Victorian times; Royal Ascot hats





This picture: Eton College was founded by King Henry VI in 1440. **Top right:** The last working mill on the River Thames at Mapledurham



with the kings and queens of England prompted Queen Victoria to designate it Royal Berkshire. It was at Windsor Castle in 1839 that the young queen proposed to her beloved Albert – and where she tragically lost him to typhoid in 1861.

Windsor is fittingly regal though – allow plenty of time to savour the glorious 13-acre complex of medieval, Restoration and Georgian buildings and don't miss the magnificent St George's Chapel, resting place of 10 of the country's monarchs, including King Henry VIII and King Charles I, the spectacular art collection gracing the walls of the State Apartments, Queen Mary's Dolls' House, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, and a remarkable treasure trove of arts and crafts in its own right.

A stone's throw from the castle walls, Shakespeare is said to have written *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, while staying at the Garter Inn (now demolished). There are plenty of reasons for good cheer in Windsor today. The compact town is a haven for shopping, whether it's luxury brands or vintage gems you're after, and there are myriad cafés and restaurants to choose from. Windsor Royal Shopping Centre, which hosts an array of high-end stores, occupies the former Victorian railway station, where Queen Victoria's waiting room can also still be seen.

It's a pleasant stroll from here across the river to Eton High Street. Noted for its art and antique shops, this charming thoroughfare also leads to Eton College, the country's most famous school. Now associated with privilege and prestige (and currently closed to visitors), Eton was founded by King Henry VI in 1440 to provide free education to 70 poor boys.

During his long reign (1760-1820), King George III was a frequent visitor and he also entertained Etonians and their masters at Windsor Castle. In respect and gratitude the school made his birthday (4 June) an annual holiday and this date is still a highlight of the Eton calendar, with picnics, games and speeches for the boys and their families.



Top to bottom: The Tudor manor house of Dorney Court; roe deer in a Finchampstead meadow; Mapledurham House, on the Oxfordshire border, is said to have been the inspiration for Toad Hall



A lovely way to appreciate Windsor is from the comfort of a horse-drawn Hackney carriage. It was from her carriage, in 1711, that Queen Anne, who adored horses, spotted the perfect location for a racecourse. On her orders the course at Ascot was created and the Queen Anne Stakes, the first race at the annual Royal Meeting each June, is named in her honour.

Raising and training horses is a historic feature of the county, with the Lambourn area known as the Valley of the Racehorse. A day at the races can be enjoyed at Newbury, too, but Ascot is the only racecourse in the country still owned by the Crown. Its most celebrated race, the Gold Cup, takes place during Royal Ascot on Ladies' Day, renowned for the fabulous hats and outfits paraded by female spectators.

Good hunting, fertile lands and proximity to the royal court made Berkshire an obvious destination for the nobility of England. In the medieval period, and over subsequent centuries, courtiers chose to build splendid residences here, a number of which survive, such as Dorney Court, Ashdown House, Englefield House and Basildon Park. Berkshire also gave rise to its own aristocrats, who became wealthy from supplying wool, fine quality cloth and corn to the capital. The River Thames played a central part in their fortunes, transporting goods and people over the centuries.

By river is the perfect way to glimpse one of Berkshire's unique features. Journey by boat from Reading or Caversham Bridge to Mapledurham, on the border with Oxfordshire, the site of the last working watermill on the Thames (and the impressive Elizabethan manor house that some have suggested was the inspiration for Toad Hall). ►



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THE PLANNER



GETTING THERE

 There are two railway stations in Windsor: Windsor Riverside, which is less than an hour from London Waterloo, and Windsor and Eton Central, which runs to Slough station, where there are many rail links. Trains leave for Hungerford and Reading regularly from London Paddington. www.nationalrail.co.uk

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RIVER & ROWING MUSEUM, HENLEY

 Find out how Kenneth Grahame's classic tale came to be written by crossing into Henley-on-Thames, up river, to the Rowing and River Museum, which has a magical *Wind in the Willows* exhibition. www.rrm.co.uk

MONKEY ISLAND HOTEL, BRAY

 Made fashionable after King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra took tea on the lawns, Monkey Island at Bray is the perfect spot for a coffee or a cocktail. It is famous for its 18th-century pavilion, painted with captivating scenes of monkeys pursuing human occupations. www.monkeyisland.co.uk

WATERLOO AT WINDSOR

 In celebration of the allied victory, King George IV created the Waterloo Chamber at Windsor Castle, a grand space filled with portraits of, among others, the Duke of Wellington. The Royal Collection at Windsor Castle marks the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo (until January 2016) with a display exploring the battle and its aftermath, including a cloak belonging to Napoleon. www.royalcollection.org.uk

THE ROYAL LANDSCAPE, WINDSOR GREAT PARK

 Virginia Water Lake, Windsor, is surrounded by thousands of acres of parkland and Georgian landscape, including the Valley Gardens and the Savill Garden, where you can take afternoon tea. www.theroyallandscape.co.uk

WALKING IN BERKSHIRE

 Head for the Downs and explore western Berkshire. Discover the Iron Age hill fort at Selsbury Camp, the mysterious Grim's Ditch and numerous Bronze Age burial mounds and barrows. www.walkinginberks.co.uk



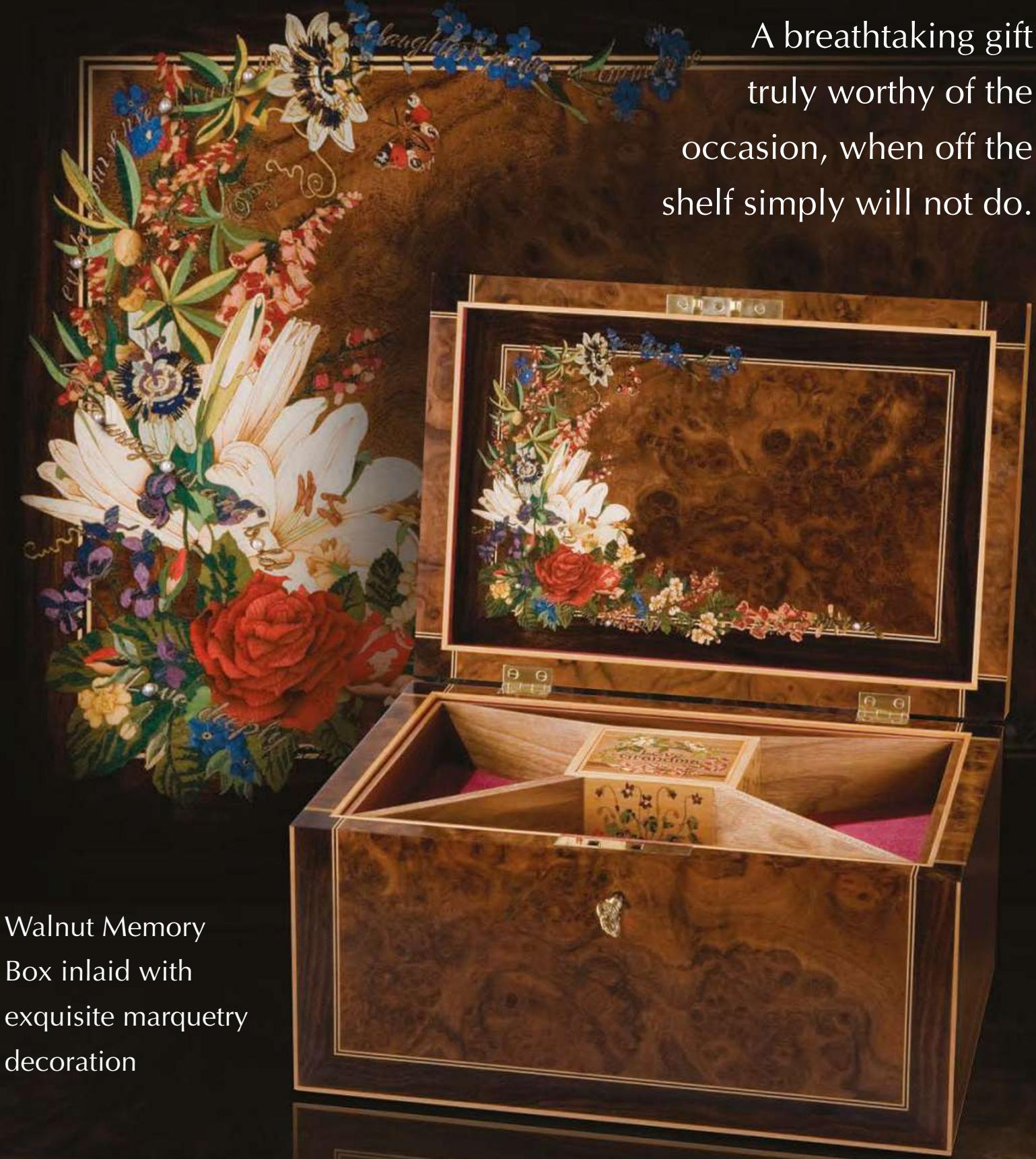
Left to right: Cascades at Virginia Water; the pretty high street in the village of Cookham, where the artist Stanley Spencer lived

The present picturesque structure dates from the 15th century and visitors are invited to meet the miller and tour the building. "There's nothing – absolutely nothing – half so much worth doing as messing about in boats," said Ratty, famously, to Mole in *The Wind in the Willows*. The Thames itself is an idyllic 'playground', offering boating, fishing, regattas and festivals, not to mention homely inns where you can enjoy riverside refreshment. Thanks to the Thames Path, the longest riverside walk in Europe – 184 miles in total – there are endless options for dreamy walks by the waterside. Some of Berkshire's prettiest stretches of the Thames's 210-mile course lie in the vicinity of Cookham, where Grahame conceived *The Wind in the Willows* and the artist Stanley Spencer lived.

Berkshire has numerous illustrious connections: King Henry I founded the Abbey of Reading and was buried there in 1135; Jane Austen went to school in the same town; Catherine of Aragon learned of her divorce from Henry VIII at Easthampstead Park near Windsor Forest, while the poet Alexander Pope grew up in nearby Binfield. As culinary magician Heston Blumenthal re-opens another Berkshire highlight, his legendary Michelin-starred restaurant, the Fat Duck at Bray, the menu will be inspired by 'childhood feelings of adventure, discovery and curiosity'. If there were no danger of appearing on the menu, Mr Toad would heartily approve. ■

 For more information on beautiful Berkshire, including its historic highlights, visit www.britain-magazine.com/berkshire

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The latest news, from Her Majesty's landmark anniversary to the restoration of a national treasure, plus essential reading this winter

NEWS

Our record-breaking Queen

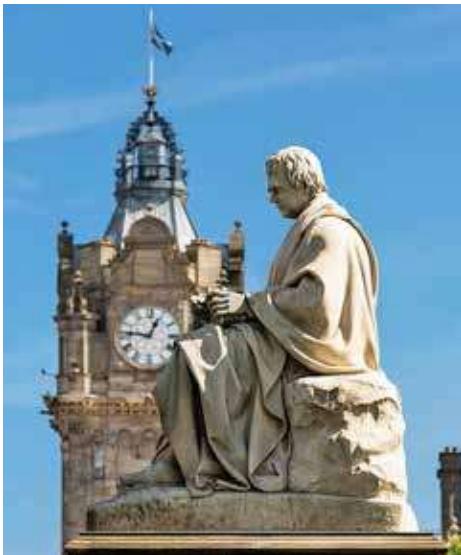
On 9 September HM The Queen passed the record of 63 years, seven months and two days, held for more than a century by her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria, to become Britain's longest-reigning monarch.

In typical style, it was business as usual for Her Majesty but that didn't stop an outpouring of affection from all over the world from people eager to celebrate our monarch, who embodies British values of dignity, quiet resolve and selfless service.

Having reigned over a period of tumultuous change, Queen Elizabeth II has managed to be both a bastion of calm and continuity, and a deft navigator of change and progress.

To mark the milestone, visitors to three royal residences – Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse – can see *Long To Reign Over Us*, a special exhibition, which features beautiful photos of the Queen in public and private. One highlight is this gorgeous Cecil Beaton portrait of Her Majesty on her Coronation Day on 2 June 1953. For more details go to www.britain-magazine.com/HMTheQueen





TRAVEL

On the borderline

The Scottish Borders are now in easier reach following the opening of the Borders Railway. Lovers of dramatic landscapes can hop on the new 30-mile route, which runs from Edinburgh to Tweedbank, to access the rolling green hills and huge expanses of woodland that characterise Midlothian and the Scottish Borders.

As well as passing through beautiful locations, the railway offers the chance to follow in the footsteps of the great Scottish man of letters, Sir Walter Scott. The line begins in Edinburgh – site of the Scott Monument (above) – and ends near his former home of Abbotsford House.

The Borders Railway is the longest domestic railway built in the UK in more than 100 years and was officially opened on 9 September by HM The Queen.
www.bordersrailway.co.uk



NEWS

Royal murderer to be unmasks?

Philippa Langley's 'Looking for Richard' investigation, which led to the discovery of King Richard III's body under a car park in Leicester, captivated the nation. Now the historian is turning her attention to another mystery: what happened to the Princes in the Tower? History has accused King Richard III of murdering his nephews, 12-year-old King Edward V and his nine-year-old brother Richard of Shrewsbury, Duke of York, after they were imprisoned in the Tower of London, but their true fates remain a mystery. Langley announced her quest during this year's anniversary events for the Battle of Bosworth, where Richard III was killed. "I have three key lines of investigation – two that have never been investigated before," she said.



SHOPPING

Time is precious

British watchmakers Robert Loomes & Co create traditional watches for both ladies and gentlemen, but they don't come cheap.

The Red Robina (above) is a 22-carat rose gold ladies' watch with enamel dial, which costs £17,800/\$27,650, but it comes from good stock – director Robert Loomes is descended from one of Britain's oldest known watchmaking families.

Robert's ancestor Thomas was a clock and watchmaker during the English Civil War and today a team of 12 use both ancient and modern watchmaking techniques to create the timepieces, which start at £9,800 (\$15,200). www.robertloomes.com



TOURS

From Bath to Stonehenge

With the discovery of a 'superhenge' of 100 huge standing stones – possibly the 'biggest' monument of its kind in Britain – buried near Stonehenge, now is a great time to visit Europe's most famous prehistoric site, where you can step inside Neolithic houses or come face-to-face with a 5,500-year-old man at the visitor centre.

With British Heritage Chauffeur Tours' Bath and Stonehenge trip, you can also visit the stone circle of Avebury, where, unlike at Stonehenge, it's possible to walk among the stones. After lunch, your chauffeur guide will drive you to the Bath Arms on the Longleat Estate, with the afternoon spent taking in the glorious sights of Regency Bath.

British Heritage Chauffeur Tours offers a range of one and multi-day trips across the UK, which are crafted to its clients' individual needs, with themed journeys focusing on *Poldark*, *Wolf Hall*, Jane Austen and the Cotswolds, among others. On each tour, knowledgeable chauffeurs will pick you up and return you to your chosen location in the UK.





OPEN HOUSE

Heaven on Earth

Described by William Morris as 'a Heaven on Earth', Kelmscott Manor, the Arts and Crafts pioneer's Cotswold retreat, was a source of inspiration for Morris's design work, imaginative writings, ideas about conservation and radical thinking.

After Morris's death in 1896, the house, which dates back to 1570, was occupied by his widow, Jane, who purchased it in 1913, and then by the couple's daughter, May, who died in 1938.

Since 1962, the Society of Antiquaries of London, where William Morris was a Fellow, has owned and managed Kelmscott, which is open to the public. This year it applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund for finance to carry out a programme of conservation works between December 2015 and March 2021. The application has been supported by Prime Minister David Cameron, in whose constituency Kelmscott stands. www.kelmscottmanor.org.uk



The traditional way to eat Yorkshire pudding is as a separate course before your main meal

RECIPE

Toffee Apple Yorkies

This sweet Yorkshire pudding is a great twist on the savoury classic. The recipe from Hobbs House Bakery was made by the Fabulous Baker Brothers, Tom and Henry Herbert, on their TV series, *A Bite Of Britain*, when visiting a café in York.

Ingredients:

FOR THE APPLE YORKSHIRE PUDDINGS:

2 eggs	More butter and caster sugar for greasing
25g (1oz) butter	Zest of one orange
200ml (7fl oz) milk	
4 apples, peeled, cored and cut into eighths	FOR THE TOFFEE SAUCE:
115g (4oz) plain flour	50g (1.7oz) butter
2 tbsp caster sugar	50g (1.7oz) golden caster sugar
Seeds of one vanilla pod	50g (1.7oz) light brown muscovado sugar
	100ml (3.5fl oz) double cream

TO SERVE: Vanilla ice cream

Method:

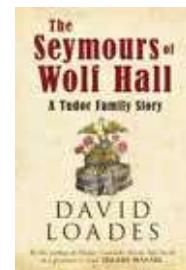
Preheat the oven to 230°C (446°F). Put the eggs, milk, flour, vanilla seeds and orange zest in a mixing bowl and whisk until left with a double-cream consistency. Allow to stand. Melt the butter in a pan, add the apples, sugar and a splash of water. Cook for 10 minutes until soft and caramelised. For the toffee sauce, melt the butter and add the sugar and heat until it bubbles. Lower the heat and add the cream. Grease a muffin tin with butter, sprinkle sugar into each hole, add the apples and pop in the hot oven for three minutes. Pour the batter into a jug, remove the hot tray from the oven and pour in the batter until each hole is full. Put back into the oven and cook for 10 minutes. Serve with a scoop of ice cream and toffee sauce. **B**

READING CORNER

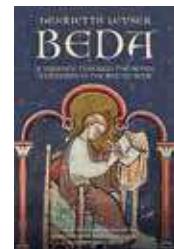
Cosy up in your favourite chair and lose yourself in one of these books



Landmark: A History of Britain in 50 Buildings by Anna Keay and Caroline Stamford (Francis Lincoln Ltd, £25). This illustrated book celebrates the Landmark Trust's unique buildings.



The Seymours of Wolf Hall – A Tudor Family Story, by David Loades (Amberley, £20), charts the rise to prominence of the infamous Seymour family in the court of King Henry VIII and their later epic fall from grace.



Beda by Henrietta Leyser (Head Zeus, £20). Beda (Bede) is our most valuable historical source on Anglo-Saxon England, and this is a perfect introduction to the man, his work and the world in which he lived.



Treasured Island by Frank Barrett (AA, £16.99). The Mail on Sunday's travel editor Frank Barrett embarks on a literary tour around the country, which becomes a personal odyssey.



The Good Hotel Guide 2016 Great Britain & Ireland, edited by Adam Raphael and Desmond Balmer (The Good Hotel Guide Ltd, £20), is a truly independent hotel guide divided into 16 useful categories.

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The library collection at Chatsworth contains over 30,000 books. The 6th Duke of Devonshire was a keen collector



PHOTO: © PAUL BARKER

GRAND DESIGNS

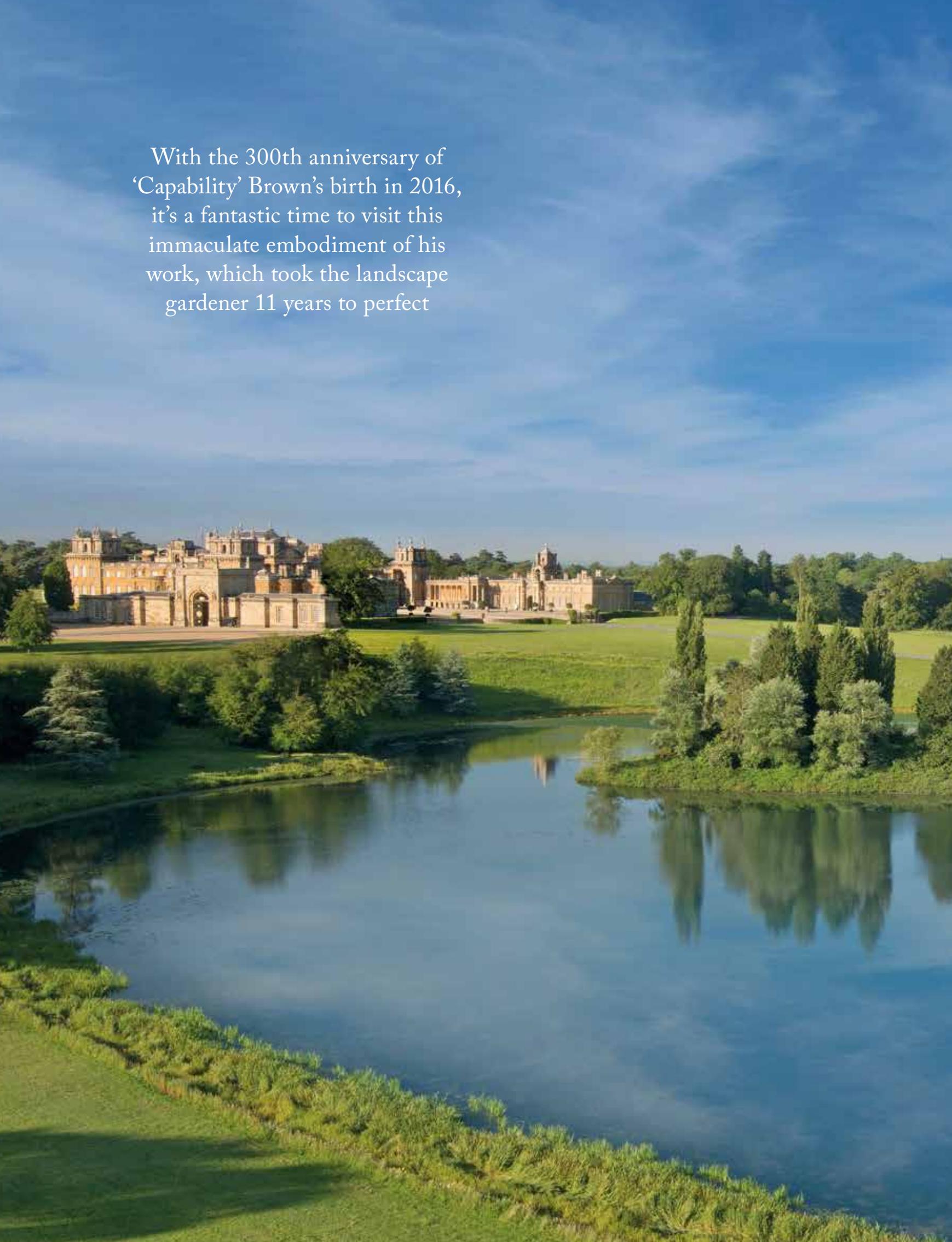
We've toured the British Isles to bring you 25 of our most magnificent manor houses and country estates, each with their own story to tell

WORDS **SALLY COFFEY**

Here at *BRITAIN* magazine the number of heritage buildings still standing proudly across our land never fails to amaze us. Many are ancestral seats that have stayed in the same family for centuries – though some may be showing signs of faded grandeur and the fall in fortunes of their owners – others are ostentatious declarations of wealth, and most have hosted kings and queens, prime ministers, actors, poets – all manner of illustrious guests.

Over the next 13 pages we will bring you some of the most fascinating of these buildings, from examples of architectural brilliance surrounded by acres of grounds, to lesser-known places that hide unbelievable stories. So read on, enjoy, and start planning your next trip. ▶

With the 300th anniversary of 'Capability' Brown's birth in 2016, it's a fantastic time to visit this immaculate embodiment of his work, which took the landscape gardener 11 years to perfect





PHOTOS: © VISIT ENGLAND/BLENHEIM PALACE

Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire

We simply couldn't run a piece on our most magnificent stately homes without mentioning Blenheim, the sprawling Oxfordshire estate that was built for John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, on the park gifted to him by Queen Anne, along with a sum of £240,000, in thanks from a 'grateful nation' for his victory over the French in the War of the Spanish Succession.

It was at Blenheim almost two centuries later that one of the duke's descendants, Sir Winston Churchill, was born and such was the hold that the estate had on the future prime minister that he chose to propose to his darling Clementine Hozier here, by the Temple of Diana, in 1908.

The house itself – the only non-royal or non-episcopal country house in England to be called a palace – is a masterpiece of English Baroque architecture, designed by Sir John Vanbrugh and Nicholas Hawksmoor, with beautiful features such as the painted ceiling in the Saloon (above). However, Blenheim's 2,000 acres of gardens (left) – one of the most exquisite works of 18th-century landscape architect Lancelot 'Capability' Brown – are what really make the place special. It's small wonder UNESCO declared it a World Heritage Site in 1987.

With the 300th anniversary of Capability's birth in 2016, it's a fantastic time to visit this immaculate embodiment of his work, which took the gardener 11 years to perfect. From February 2016 there will be a new temporary exhibition celebrating his work and you can also take a self-guided walk through the Capability Brown Trail.

www.blenheimpalace.com



Listen to our interview with Lady Carnarvon at www.britain-magazine.com/highclere

Highclere Castle, West Berkshire

As the *Downton Abbey* countdown begins, surely it's time to revisit the glorious Berkshire ancestral home that has formed the backdrop to so many scenes of the Crawley family and their household.

The 'real' *Downton Abbey*, Highclere Castle (top), is actually the family seat of the Earls of Carnarvon and it was the current countess, Lady Carnarvon, a close friend of *Downton Abbey* writer Julian Fellowes, who saw the value in opening the house up to the period drama that has revived the estate's fortunes.

Although Highclere has been in the hands of the Carnarvon family since 1679, (and its gardens were also designed by Capability Brown), the current house was remodelled in the Jacobean style in 1838 for the 3rd Earl of Carnarvon by Sir Charles Barry, the man who famously rebuilt the Palace of Westminster.

Highclere Castle became the focus of a media circus in 1922 when the 5th Earl of Carnarvon and his associate Howard Carter discovered the Tomb of Tutankhamun. The earl died shortly after the discovery, leading to the story of the 'Curse of Tutankhamun', though his death could be explained by blood poisoning from an infected mosquito bite.

Relics from this great archaeological find can be seen in the cellars of the house – many of the artefacts were tucked away in cupboards in Highclere Castle until they were rediscovered by the family in 1987, with further statues and antiquities loaned back to the Carnarvon family by the British Museum and Newbury Museum.

www.highclerecastle.co.uk



PHOTO: © SIMON WATKINSON

Chatsworth, Derbyshire

Few English estates draw such delight as this one in the heart of the Peak District. Chatsworth (opening pages and above) is recognisable to many as Mr Darcy's home of Pemberley in the 2005 film adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, starring Keira Knightley, but eagle-eyed viewers may also remember it from another Knightley film, *The Duchess*.

Chatsworth has been the seat of the Dukes of Devonshire since 1549 and has passed through the hands of 16 generations of the Cavendish family.

The house is famed for its art collection, which spans four centuries, but its state apartments, overhauled to accommodate a visit from King William III and Queen Mary II that never actually happened, are extraordinary.

Chatsworth has also recently announced that it will be hosting an annual flower show in partnership with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) from 2017.

www.chatsworth.org

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Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire

Bess of Hardwick was one of the most influential figures in Elizabethan times – she was second in wealth only to Queen Elizabeth I – and Hardwick Hall (above) was one of her homes.

It is a magnificent example of a prodigy house – showy Tudor and Jacobean properties that were built with a view to housing the queen on her annual progresses.

The large and plentiful windows, which were an extravagance as glass was expensive, led to the rhyme, 'Hardwick Hall, more glass than wall.'

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hardwick



Wentworth Woodhouse, South Yorkshire

The largest private residence in Europe – Wentworth (left) is twice the width of Buckingham Palace – this 18th-century mansion, created by wealthy Whig magnates, is currently up for sale, so book a tour while you still can.

Once the home of Charles I's ill-fated administrator, Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Strafford, who was tried and beheaded for treason in 1641, the house also hosted a visit by King George V and Queen Mary in 1912.

www.wentworthwoodhouse.co.uk



PHOTOS: © ELEANOR SCRIVEN/ROBERT HARDING WORLD IMAGERY/CORBIS/NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/MARK BOLTON/LEO ROSSER/ALAMY

Lacock Abbey, Wiltshire

This quirky country house (above), near the historic town of Lacock, was built on a former nunnery and represented the 'real' Wolf Hall, the family seat of the Seymours, in the recent TV adaptation of Hilary Mantel's novels.

Scenes depicting King Henry VIII's bedroom and his lodgings at Calais were also filmed here. In real life, Henry sold Lacock to one of his courtiers, Sir William Sharington, following the Dissolution of the Monasteries and it is now in the care of the National Trust.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lacock

For more stories on Britain's stately homes, go to www.britain-magazine.com



Stonor, Oxfordshire

Although it is one of our oldest manor houses, Stonor is also one of our lesser-known stately homes, despite the fact that one of the most significant religious events in British history took place here. In 1581 Edmund Campion hid in the roof space while he printed 400 copies of his famous treatise, *Decem Rationes*, arguing for Catholicism. However, he was soon caught and tortured before being hung, drawn and quartered.

The house (left) is open at select times from April to September and holds a rare copy of the *Decem Rationes*.

www.stonor.com

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Castle Howard, North Yorkshire

So ambitious was the vision for Castle Howard, the private residence of the Howard family for more than 300 years, that the Baroque building took over 100 years to complete but the result was astounding, with two symmetrical wings and a central dome.

Although much of the building was devastated by fire in the 1940s, over the years many rooms have been restored, though when the house was used as the backdrop for the film version of Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* in 2008 parts were superficially restored and the East Wing remains a shell.

www.castlehoward.co.uk



PHOTOS: © VISIT YORK/ENGLISH HERITAGE/PATRICIA PAYNE



Kenwood House, London

Hidden in London's Hampstead Heath, Kenwood House is a Robert Adam's house, remodelled by the architect in 1764 to include a new entrance, attic-storey bedrooms and one of his most famous interiors – the Great Library (above), which was restored to its original colours during a major restoration project in 2013.

The grounds are home to ancient woodland and landscaped gardens, probably designed by Humphry Repton, and feature sculptures from the likes of Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore.

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/kenwood

Crag Hall, Derbyshire

Until recently this sandstone Georgian country house (below) with views over the Peak District National Park was the private shooting lodge and holiday home of the Earl and Countess of Derby, but now you can hire it for your own private gathering.

Located amid historic royal hunting ground – legend has it the last wild boar of England were hunted here – this 12-bedroomed property can accommodate up to 21 guests – perfect for living out the *Downton Abbey* fantasy. ▶

www.craghall.co.uk





Lyme Park, Cheshire

Best known for its starring role as Mr Darcy's Pemberley in the 1995 BBC adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (yes, that scene when Colin Firth emerges from the lake), Lyme Park is a fine example of an Italianate palace.

Outside, the 1,300 acres are home to a medieval herd of red and fallow deer, while inside you'll find an incredible collection of English clocks and the famous Mortlake tapestries. The Edwardian era was when Lyme Park was in its heyday and the house is a time capsule of that period.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lyme-park





Buscot Park, Oxfordshire

Built in the Renaissance Revival style of architecture between 1779 and 1783 for Edward Loveden Townsend to designs by James Darley, this resplendent stately home (top right) houses the Farringdon Collection, with paintings by Rembrandt, Reynolds, Rubens, Van Dyck and Murillo.

www.buscot-park.com

Great Chalfield Manor and Garden, Wiltshire

The stand in for Thomas Cromwell's home of Austin Friars in TV's *Wolf Hall*, Great Chalfield (below right) is as pretty an English country house as you can imagine.

The 15th-century moated manor house is set in tranquil countryside and features a gatehouse and stunning oriel windows, all of which withstood a siege by Royalists during the English Civil War. The private residence offers guided tours or you can book into one of the reasonably priced gorgeous four-poster bedrooms for the night.

www.greatchalfield.co.uk

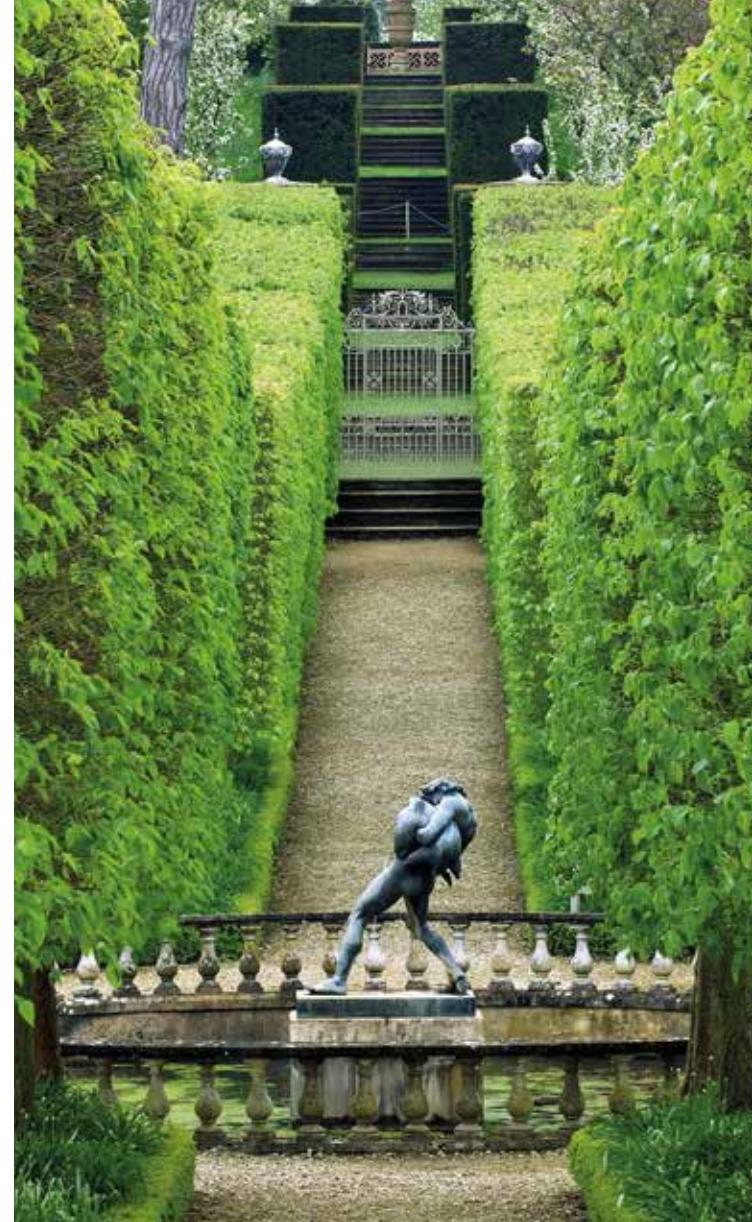
Burghley House, Lincolnshire

Described as 'England's greatest Elizabethan house', Burghley was built and designed by William Cecil, Lord High Treasurer to Queen Elizabeth I, between 1555 and 1587, and features 2,000 acres of Capability Brown gardens, (which were added later), and a deer park.

The interior (see below) is lavish and features sumptuous fabrics and carvings by Grinling Gibbons, while the Pagoda Room has portraits of Queen Elizabeth I, her father, Oliver Cromwell and members of the Cecil family.

There's a theory that beneath its foundations lie the remains of the medieval settlement of Burghley, mentioned in the *Domesday Book* but so far evading archaeologists. ►

www.burghley.co.uk



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Mount Stuart, Isle of Bute

It may come as a surprise that the first house in Britain to have an indoor heated swimming pool is hidden on the tiny Isle of Bute in the Firth of Clyde in Scotland, but then Mount Stuart (top right) is no ordinary place. It was also probably the first property in Scotland to have electric lighting, central heating and a passenger lift – a horse-drawn railway was needed for the building project.

The Gothic Revival building, which replaced an earlier Georgian property, is a feat of Victorian engineering, created for John Crichton-Stuart, 3rd Marquess of Bute, who, in the late 19th century, was the richest man in Britain.

www.mountstuart.com

Woburn Abbey, Bedfordshire

Woburn (centre right) has been in the hands of the Russell family since King Edward VI gifted it to John Russell in 1547, for his service to his father, King Henry VIII – in 1550 John was made the first Earl of Bedford.

Ever since the 4th Earl moved his family in during the 1620s, it has been the family seat and in the 18th century it was turned into the English Palladian home that you see today. The estate first opened to the public in 1955 and its impressive art collection includes the largest private collection of Venetian views painted by Canaletto on public view and the Armada Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I.

www.woburn.co.uk

Longleat House, Wiltshire

Completed in 1580, Longleat is another of our great Elizabethan houses, set in 900 acres of parkland landscaped by Capability Brown. Inside you'll find one of the largest book collections in Europe and the bloodstained waistcoat King Charles I was wearing when he was executed in 1649, which sits in the Great Hall.

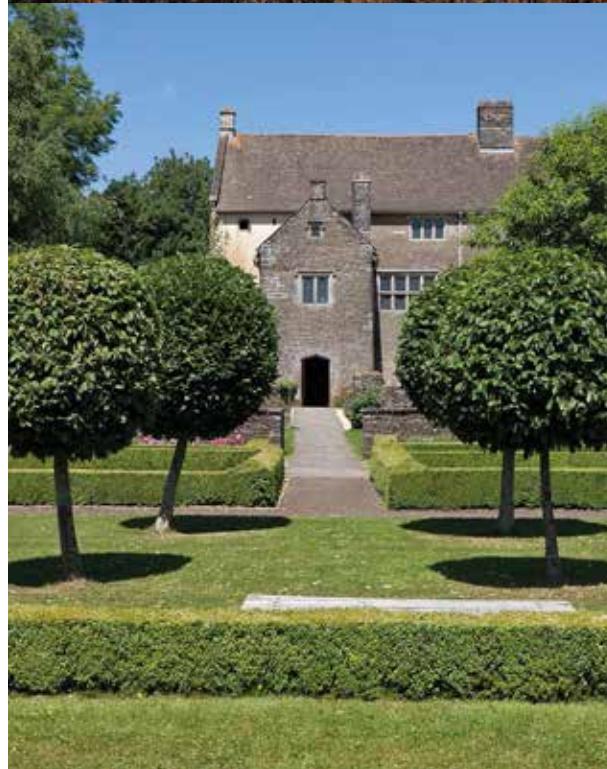
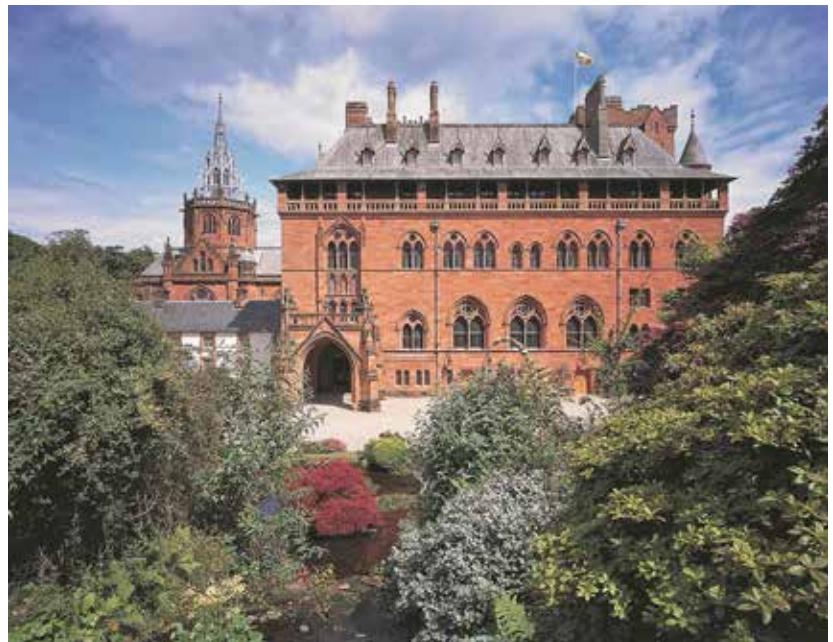
Now home to the 7th Marquess of Bath and run by his son, Viscount Weymouth, it's come a long way from the property bought by MP John Thynne in 1540 for £53.

www.longleat.co.uk

Llancaiach Fawr Manor, South Wales

Built circa 1550 for Dafydd ap Richard, this house (bottom right) is one of the best examples of a semi-fortified manor in Wales. It's laid out much as it would have been in 1645 when King Charles I visited, when he must have angered the owner, Colonel Edward Prichard, who switched to the side of the Roundheads.

www.your.caerphilly.gov.uk/llancaiachfawr/



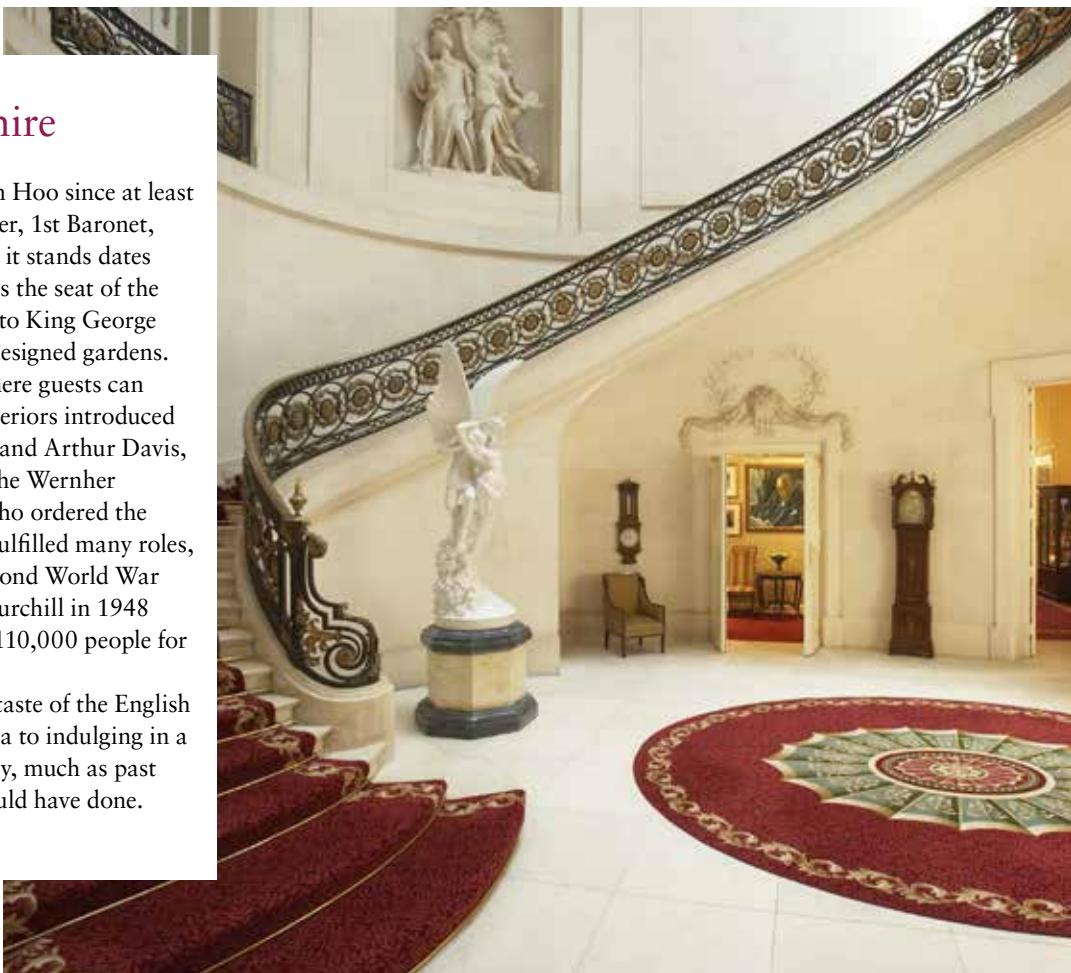
Luton Hoo, Bedfordshire

A house has stood on the site of Luton Hoo since at least 1601 when merchant Sir Robert Napier, 1st Baronet, purchased the estate, but the house as it stands dates from the late 18th century when it was the seat of the 3rd Earl of Bute, then prime minister to King George III, and it too has Capability Brown designed gardens.

Luton Hoo is now a lavish hotel where guests can enjoy the Edwardian Belle Epoque interiors introduced in 1903 by architects Charles Mewes and Arthur Davis, who built the Ritz – one highlight is the Wernher Restaurant, named after the owner who ordered the works. Over the years the estate has fulfilled many roles, including testing tanks during the Second World War and hosting a visit by Sir Winston Churchill in 1948 during which he thanked a crowd of 110,000 people for their wartime support.

Today it's a fantastic place to get a taste of the English country life, from taking afternoon tea to indulging in a spot of clay pigeon shooting or archery, much as past guests of its distinguished owners would have done.

www.lutonhoo.co.uk



Norton Conyers, North Yorkshire

It is one of the most enduring images in English literature, that of the mad woman locked away in the attic in Thornfield Hall by Mr Rochester, and it was here at Norton Conyers that Charlotte Brontë is said to have taken inspiration for her novel, *Jane Eyre*.

Charlotte Brontë visited the late medieval house in 1839, before she wrote her seminal novel, and it is surely no coincidence that Norton Conyers has its own legend of a woman hidden away in an attic. The discovery of a blocked staircase in 2004, much like the one in the novel, seemed to confirm the theory. The house has recently been restored and reopened to the public on a few select days each year. Check the website for 2016 opening times.

www.nortonconyers.org.uk

Hatfield House, Hertfordshire

Within easy reach of London, this beautiful Jacobean style property was built for Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury, son of statesman William Cecil, on the site of Hatfield Palace, which he had exchanged with King James I for the nearby Cecil family home of Theobalds.

Like the king, Robert Cecil wasn't keen on the rather old-fashioned Hatfield Palace, which had been owned by King Henry VIII, and so he rebuilt it as Hatfield House.

The estate has strong provenance – it was here that Henry VIII's offspring, Mary, Elizabeth and Edward played as children – Elizabeth was even supposedly told of her ascension to the throne at Hatfield.

The Marble Hall, with ornate oak carving on the walls, takes its name from the chequered black and white marble flooring where past guests would have danced at opulent balls. Guests were overlooked by the Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I (right) – perhaps the most colourful portrait of the Tudor era – whose inscription 'Non sine sole iris', meaning 'no rainbow without the sun' reminds viewers that only the queen's wisdom can ensure peace and prosperity.

www.hatfield-house.co.uk



PHOTO: © CLASSIC IMAGE/ALAMY/J. BALDWIN



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Blickling Hall, Norfolk

Was this red brick mansion built on the site of the birthplace of Anne Boleyn? The house as it stands today was built on the ruins of the former Boleyn home during the reign of King James I. Anne's parents lived here from 1499 to 1505, so if Anne's supposed birth date of 1501 is right, the theory is highly probable.

On the staircase of the Great Hall there are reliefs of Anne and her daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, while her ghost is said to appear in white and carrying her severed head every year on 19 May, the anniversary of her execution. The South Drawing Room (top left), with its Jacobean-style chimneypiece and ceiling, is also highly impressive.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/blickling-estate



Montacute House, Somerset

This late Elizabethan house stood in for Greenwich Palace in the recent TV adaptation of Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall* and is considered a masterpiece in Renaissance architecture. The house's biggest draw by far is its Long Gallery, the longest of its kind in England, which displays over 60 Tudor and Elizabethan portraits loaned to the house by the National Portrait Gallery, and the gardens (centre left) are simply beautiful.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/montacute-house



Sudeley Castle, Gloucestershire

The final resting place of King Henry VIII's last wife, Catherine Parr, this beautiful private castle is perhaps as well known for its colourful gardens as its restored Tudor buildings.

Situated in the heart of the Cotswolds, in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, just a few miles from Broadway, Sudeley lay in ruin for almost 200 years following the English Civil War when Cromwell ordered its 'slighting', until an ambitious restoration project began in 1837.

www.sudeleycastle.co.uk

Somerleyton Hall, Suffolk

This gorgeous Tudor palace (bottom left), which opens to the public from April to September, features one of Britain's finest yew hedge mazes amid its spectacular gardens, which also includes a 70ft-long pergola.

www.somerleyton.co.uk

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First prize is The Longest Reigning Monarch 2015 UK £5 Silver Proof Piedfort Coin, which retails at £160. Just 3,700 of these coins have been produced and both the reverse and obverse feature designs by James Butler MBE RA, one of Britain's foremost sculptors.

The coin's reverse bears the familiar symbol of royalty, the Coronation Crown; the obverse, unusually, features a commemorative effigy of Her Majesty. Struck on this double-thickness sterling silver Proof Piedfort, the coin is accompanied by a Certificate of Authenticity. Also included is a booklet that details the social and technological highlights during The Queen's reign, and her links with them, as a monarch who has presided over unprecedented change.

Second prize is The Longest Reigning Monarch 2015 UK £5 Silver Proof Coin (also designed by Butler), of which 9,000 were created and which retails at £80. We also have five runners-up prizes of The Longest Reigning Monarch 2015 UK £20 Fine Silver Coin, one of 150,000, which features Jody Clark's definitive coinage portrait of The Queen and which is worth its intrinsic value of £20.

To find out more about these special coins go to www.royalmint.com/shop

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For full Ts & Cs go to www.britain-magazine.com/royalmint. Closing date for entries is 2 January 2016.

HOW TO ENTER

To be in with the chance of winning one of these prizes go to www.britain-magazine.com/royalmint or fill out the coupon below with the answer to the following question:

Question: Who previously held the title of Britain's longest reigning monarch?

- a) King Henry VIII
- b) Queen Victoria
- c) Queen Anne

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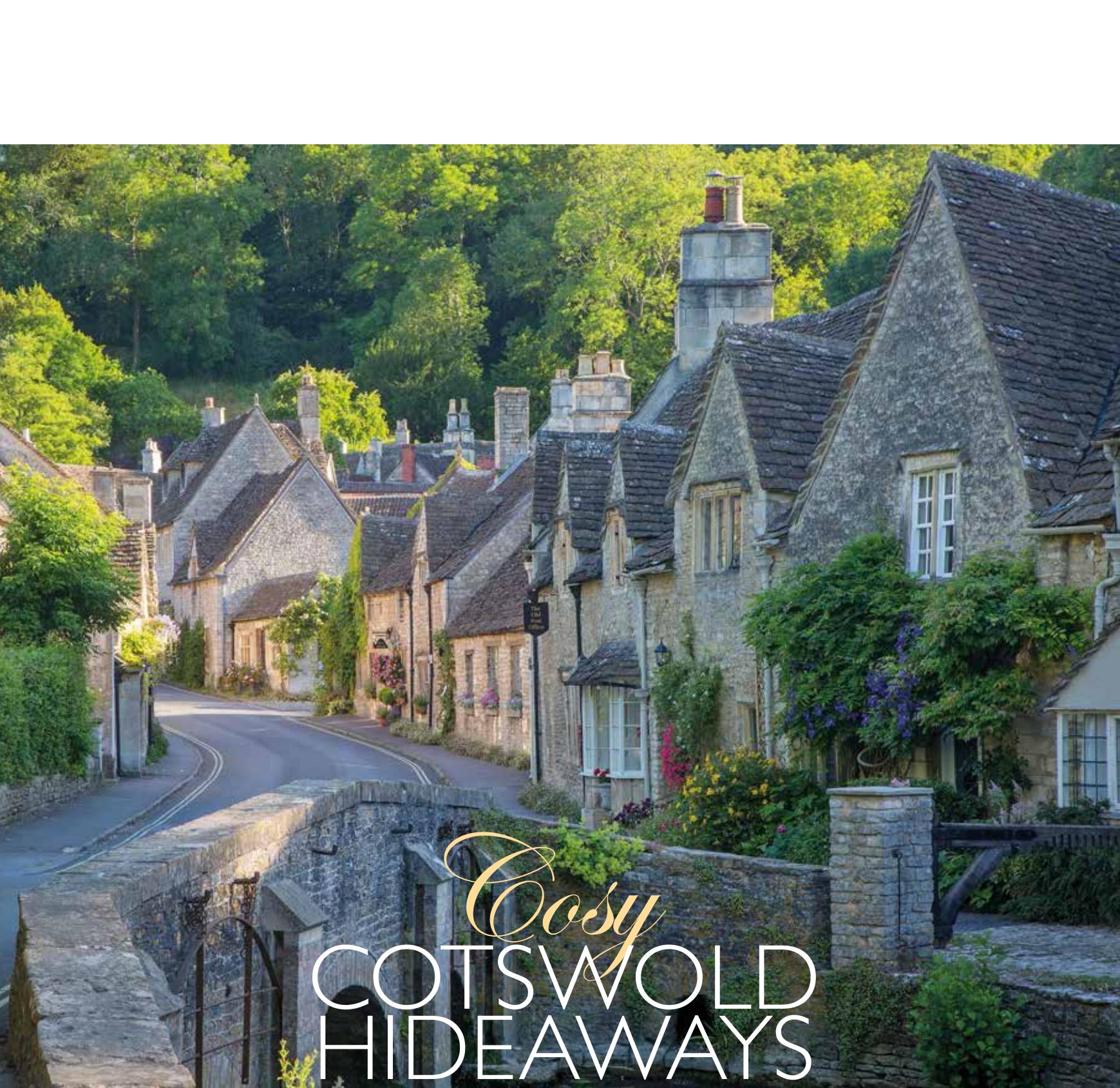
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Cozy COTSWOLD HIDEAWAYS

From Cromwell's favourite retreat to the home of a scandalous society beauty, check into one of Britain's historic Cotswold inns this winter and enjoy roaring log fires, antique furnishings, sumptuous food and other festive trimmings

WORDS HEIDI FULLER-LOVE

Nestled in the heart of England, the Cotswolds is a picturesque region of rolling hills, winding rivers and pretty medieval villages that extends across six counties.

It's an area that offers the English idyll, attracting famous guests through the years – several of TS Elliot's poems were inspired by his visits, *Peter Pan* author, JM Barrie, would spend his summers in the north Cotswolds and HRH Prince Charles even owns a house here. Indeed, it's possible to visit the gardens at Highgrove.

Wealthy mill owners built most of the houses in these picture-perfect pastoral villages during the Middle Ages when the wool trade boomed. Constructed from honey-coloured limestone, many of these hamlets have protected status, making them a magnet for film and TV crews, who flock here to shoot period dramas ranging from *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* to *Downton Abbey*. If you're looking for somewhere to bed down for the night then you can stay in one of the region's many historic houses. Atmospheric, cosy and welcoming, these properties are the perfect place for a festive break.

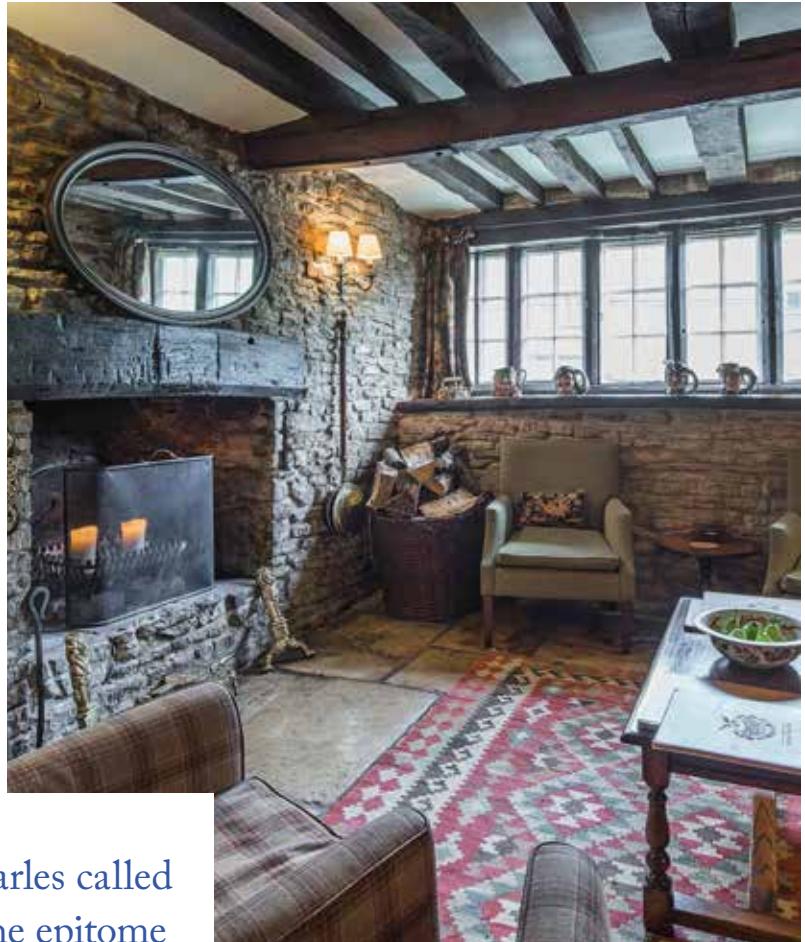
Set on a 90-acre estate overlooking the finishing line of the legendary Cheltenham racecourse, Ellenborough Park is one of the Cotswolds' most exquisite properties. Described by 18th-century author of *A New History of Gloucestershire*, Samuel Rudder, as "one of the greatest curiosities in the country", this beautiful restored mansion became notorious when Edward Law, soon to become the first Earl of Ellenborough, married society beauty Jane Digby, 17 years his junior, after the death of his first wife.

Digby soon left Law for an Austrian prince, then had stormy relationships with a string of other men, before marrying a Bedouin chief 20 years younger than her.



Front page: Pretty Castle Combe, in Wiltshire. Top: The Old Swan & Minster. Bottom: Kitchen garden within the grounds of Owlpen Manor, a Tudor house said to be haunted by Queen Margaret of Anjou

Prince Charles called Owlpen the epitome of the English village fairytale Cotswold hamlet



Opened as a luxurious hotel in 2008, Ellenborough Park has 60 rooms decorated in period country style and several magnificent reception rooms, where you can curl up next to a roaring log fire sipping a Lady Ellenborough cocktail, made with gin and Champagne, beneath walls hung with Tudor portraits.

From Cheltenham, make the half-hour journey to Owlpen, stopping off at Stroud to enjoy the café culture for which this steep-street market town is known. Described by Prince Charles as "the epitome of the English village fairytale Cotswold hamlet", this breathtakingly picturesque parish clusters around a centuries-old Tudor manor house that was built for the de Olepenne family in the 1450s and is surrounded by a magnificent formal garden planted with topiary yews, and sweet-scented old-fashioned roses.

Said to be haunted by the ghost of Queen Margaret of Anjou, wife of King Henry VI and a key figure in the Wars of the Roses, who has been spotted wandering along the Great Chamber, Owlpen was acquired by legendary Pre-Raphaelite art patrons Sir Geoffrey and Lady Mander in the 1920s. Inherited by their son a few decades ago, Owlpen Manor now offers accommodation in several, charmingly renovated cottages, including an 18th-century watermill and a listed 17th-century lodge, furnished with oak four-poster beds, unique Tudor and Stuart era textiles, and other original fixtures and fittings.

From Owlpen it's an easy drive, via a string of pretty villages, to the Old Swan & Minster Mill. Elegantly sprawling alongside the winding Windrush river, the delightful Old Swan overlooks the ruins of the 15th-century Minster Lovell Hall, which is haunted, according to local legend, by the ghost of Yorkist Francis Lovell, who went into hiding here after the Battle of Bosworth, and whose skeleton was said to have been discovered several centuries later.

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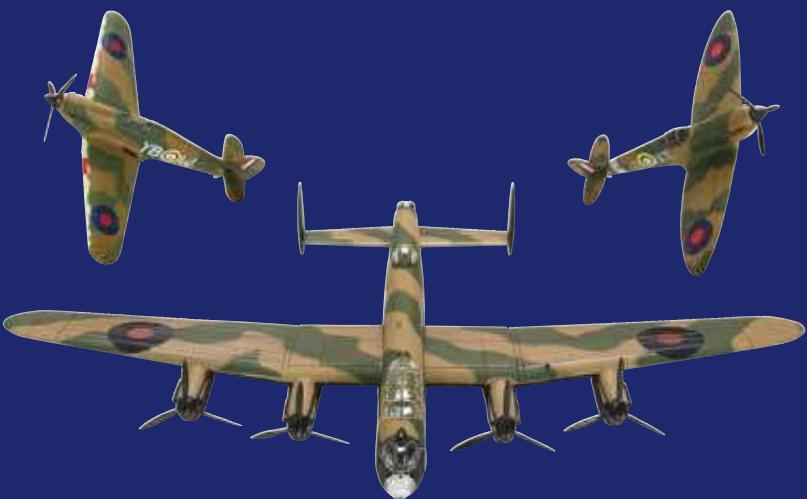
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This picture: The Lamb was originally a group of weavers' cottages, built in 1420. Below: The inn takes its name from the days of Burford market and its big sheep fairs

Refurbished in 2010 under the auspices of Peter de Savary, the man behind the spectacular rebirth of Devon's Bovey Castle, this charming 600-year-old inn has low raftered ceilings, narrow corridors, an old spiral staircase and a snug restaurant serving local specialties. Opposite the Old Swan stands Minster Mill, a former 18th-century watermill surrounded by vast swathes of wildflower meadows, offering 44 lovingly renovated rooms, with terraces looking out onto the weed-tangled river waters below.

Halfway between Oxford's medieval spires and Cheltenham's Regency charms, Burford is a 20-minute ride from Minster Lovell along the Windrush River. A pretty medieval hamlet once famed for its wool trade, Burford's uneven, stone-flagged streets are lined with antique shops and tearooms. Built in the same period as the Old Swan in Minster Lovell, the Lamb Inn, in the centre of town, started life as a group of weavers' cottages. In 1718, a local couple, Thomas and Susannah Hucks, bought the cluster of houses for the princely sum of £60 and joined them together to create the Lamb Inn, whose frontage is typical of the yeoman properties of the 18th century.

Three centuries later, the tastefully renovated inn has retained its original flagstone floors, Gothic windows and cosy rooms furnished in period style, while adding a gourmet restaurant serving locally sourced, traditional dishes and real English ales on tap.

Described by Arts and Crafts pioneer William Morris as "the most beautiful village in England", many believe Bibury lives up to its name and in its heart stands the Swan Hotel, a former 17th-century coaching inn, which is now a welcoming country hotel, housed in largely remodelled 19th-century buildings.





Referred to as 'the jewel of the Cotswolds', the village of Broadway, a 40-minute drive from Minster Lovell, derives its name from its wide main street lined with chestnut trees and typical Cotswold houses. Popular with British artists and writers for centuries, this atmospheric village has played host to legendary creators such as Scottish writer JM Barrie, English composer Edward Elgar and textile designer and poet William Morris.

The best place to soak up this creative atmosphere, as you step back in time, is the vast estate of Buckland Manor. Recorded in the *Domesday Book*, Buckland Manor once belonged to Richard Gresham who was Mayor of London in the 16th century and this magnificent property was subsequently inherited by Thomas, his enterprising son who founded London's Royal Exchange in 1571 (see page 60).

In the antique furnished reception area, smartly dressed maids rush forward to help you with your luggage before guiding you, through high raftered halls decked out with fine rugs and antiques, to your elegant room.

Clockwise, from top: Ellenborough Park was the scene of scandal in the 1800s; period-style rooms in the Swan Hotel; the Bibury hotel is a former 17th-century coaching inn

If you can tear yourself away from beautiful Buckland Manor, make a beeline for Castle Combe in the south of the Cotswolds. Barely altered since King Henry VI granted villagers the right to hold a weekly market here in 1440, this charismatic village has been the setting for countless Hollywood films, including Steven Spielberg's recent adaptation of *War Horse* and the 1967 version of *Doctor Dolittle*, starring Rex Harrison. Castle Combe was also renowned for its textile industry during the Middle Ages and for its distinctive red and white cloth.

Overlooking the much-filmed market square, the Castle Inn Hotel dates from the 12th century. The hotel's long, low honeystone building hides a cluster of elegant rooms and a vast dining room. Legend has it that the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell often came here to escape the stress of courtly life. Whether you choose the home of a scandalous beauty, or prefer to stay in the favourite retreat of Britain's most celebrated puritan, your historic Cotswolds stay is sure to be full of festive cheer. ▶

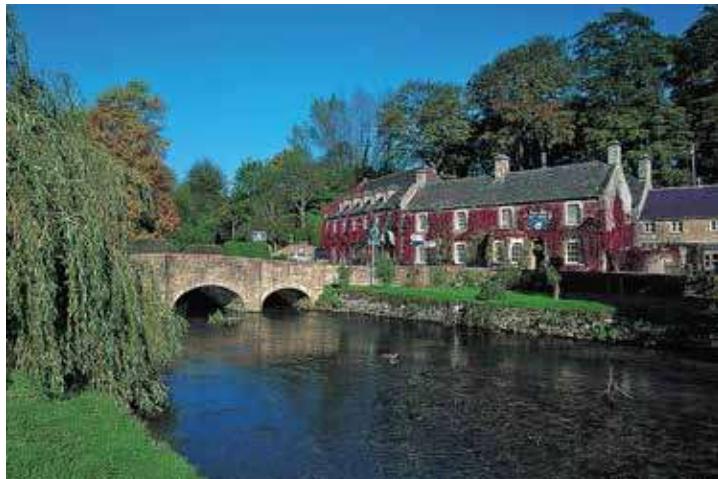


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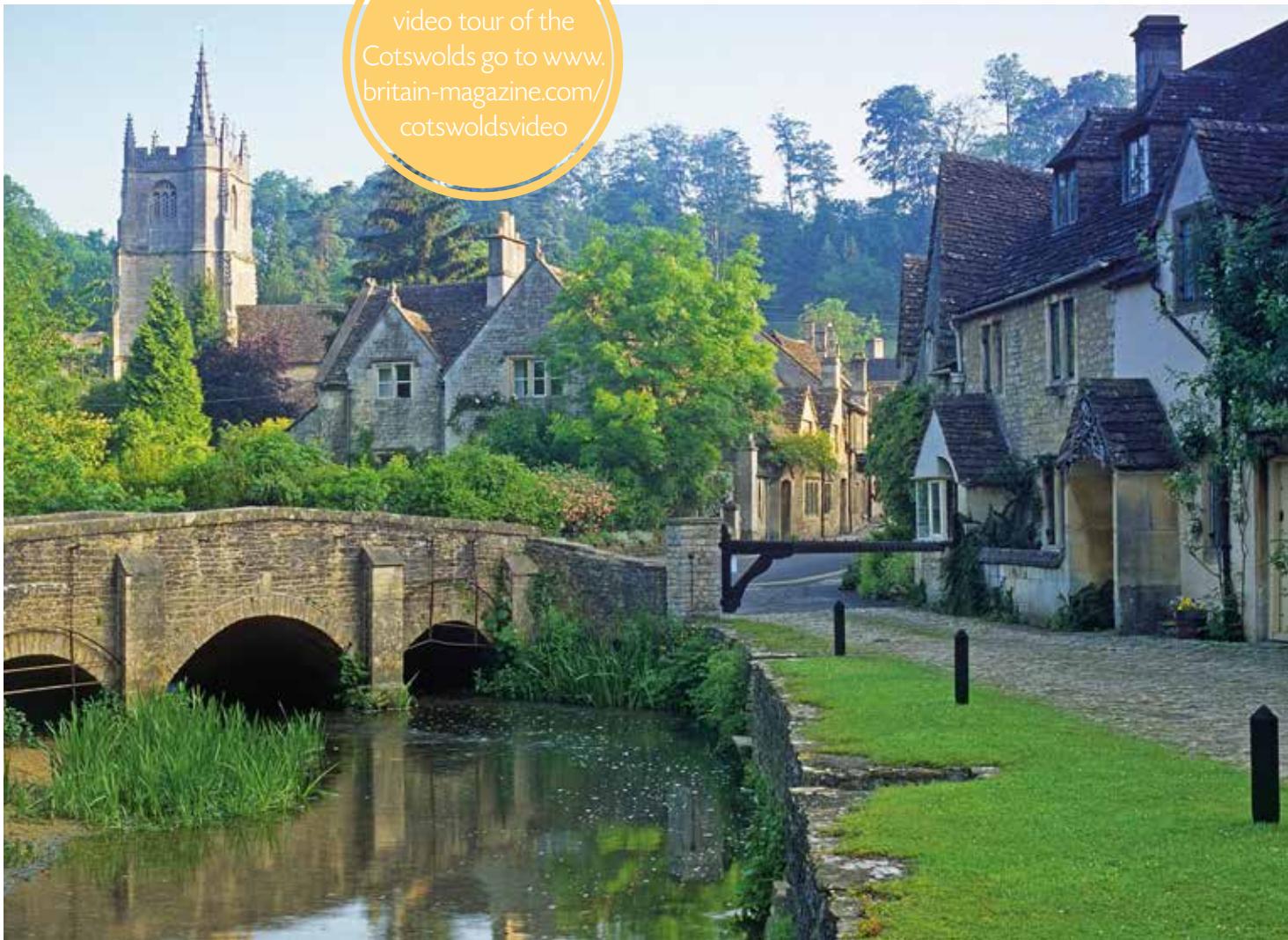
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THE OLD SWAN & MINSTER MILL

This 600-year-old inn, set in a small Cotswold village, offers charming rooms within its centuries-old walls. www.oldswanandminstermill.com

THE LAMB INN

Originally built in 1420 as a collection of weavers' cottages, this is as cosy an inn as one could imagine. www.cotswold-inns-hotels.co.uk/property/the_lamb_inn

THE SWAN HOTEL

An enchanting hotel in the pretty village of Bibury.

www.cotswold-inns-hotels.co.uk/property/the_swan_hotel

BUCKLAND MANOR

Dating back to the 13th century, this is a quintessential country house hotel with antique fixtures and fittings. www.bucklandmanor.co.uk

THE CASTLE INN HOTEL

This ancient building, which retains much of its 12th-century character, is located in the picturesque village of Castle Combe (top), a popular film location. www.castle-inn.info

TRAVEL ESSENTIALS

GETTING THERE

By train There are mainline stations at Cheltenham Spa, Gloucester, Kemble (serving Cirencester), Moreton-in-Marsh, Stonehouse and Stroud, all of which have direct trains from London. www.trainline.com

By air The nearest airports are Birmingham and Bristol, while London's Heathrow is only 65 miles from the southern reaches. From Belfast, Jersey or the Isle of Man, you can even fly into Gloucestershire Airport.

GETTING AROUND

The Cotswolds Discoverer pass offers unlimited travel across a range of bus and train routes in the region. www.escapetothecotswolds.org.uk/discoverer

Hire a car to explore the country roads, including the Roman Fosse Way, or book a guided tour. www.avis.co.uk; www.cotswoldtourismtours.co.uk

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The Lost Tudor Princess



Author and historian Alison Weir tells the story of Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, the woman who some thought should have been Queen of England

WORDS ALISON WEIR





R

Royal Tudor blood ran in her veins. Her mother was a queen, and she herself was the granddaughter, niece, cousin and grandmother of monarchs; indeed some thought she should be Queen of England. Beautiful and tempestuous, she defied her uncle, King Henry VIII, and created scandal by indulging in two illicit affairs. The marriage arranged for her turned into a love match and she remained a dynastic threat to the Tudors, especially Queen Elizabeth I, who feared her. A born political intriguer, she was thrice imprisoned in the Tower of London. She helped to bring about one of the most notorious royal marriages of the 16th century, but it brought her only tragedy. A brave survivor, Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, was a prominent and important figure in Tudor England, and yet today she is largely forgotten and overlooked.

Margaret Douglas was the daughter of sister, Margaret Tudor (daughter of Elizabeth of York, queen of King James IV of Scotland), husband, the Earl of Angus, though the marriage broke down. Young Margaret was born at Harbottle Castle, Northumberland, in 1515, her mother having fled to England after a political coup in Scotland. Because of her Tudor blood, this little girl had a claim to the English throne, which would ensure, in the years to come, that she was seen as a threat to the Tudor dynasty.

As the only child of a broken marriage, Margaret had a turbulent childhood in Scotland, especially after her father removed her from her mother's custody and she became embroiled in the treacherous conflict with her half-brother, James V of Scotland. Sent to England,

Margaret was welcomed at the English court by her uncle, Henry VIII, who had an affection for her. At first he sent her to live with her aunt, Mary Tudor, Dowager Queen of France and Duchess of Suffolk, and then had her transferred to the household of her cousin, the Princess Mary, Henry's daughter by Catherine of Aragon. The two girls became close, but after Henry discarded Catherine and married Anne Boleyn, Mary's household was dissolved and Margaret became a lady of honour to the new Queen Anne, which must have plunged her into a conflict of loyalties. Margaret seems to have become highly regarded at court, where she was part of an educated female literary circle.

The deeply personal poems she composed or transcribed in what became known as the *Devonshire Manuscript* track the course of her first, tragic love affair. With characteristic impulsiveness, she rashly involved herself in scandal. In 1536, just after Anne Boleyn's

execution, it was discovered that Margaret had precontracted herself to Lord Thomas Howard, brother of the Duke of Norfolk (and uncle of Anne Boleyn), without the king's permission, which was a serious matter, given her Tudor blood. Both were speedily imprisoned in the Tower and sentenced to death. The Act of Attainder passed by Parliament against Thomas Howard was the first to legislate on royal marriages, expressly forbidding any member of the king's family to wed without his assent.

Margaret and Thomas were spared execution – Henry was content with keeping them in prison. When Margaret became ill in October 1537, she was granted freedom. Thomas Howard was not so lucky: he died in the Tower. It has often been claimed that Henry then placed Margaret under house arrest at Syon Abbey, which once

lay on bank of the River Thames, but in

order to convalesce.

To learn a lesson from this episode. In 1540, Margaret was placed in the households of Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves and Catherine Howard, she again incurred Henry's displeasure when she had an affair with Charles Howard, Catherine Howard's brother. Again, it has been said that Margaret was placed under house arrest at Syon Abbey, but in fact she escaped with a ticking off by Archbishop Cranmer. She spent most of the next two years at the Duke of Norfolk's house at

Kenninghall, until in 1543 she attended

the marriage of Henry VIII to Catherine Howard, who became Queen Catherine's chief honour.

To gain an ally in his proposed

marriage, Henry VIII arranged for

Matthew Stewart, Earl of Lennox, a

Scottish exile in England and a cultivated man who had spent years in France. The pair fell in love, and an intricate pendant, the Lennox Jewel – probably given to Margaret by Matthew – survives in the Royal Collection as testimony to their affection. Sadly, of their eight children, only two survived infancy: Henry, Lord Darnley, and Charles. Through this marriage Margaret, a determined intriguer and feisty operator, became deeply involved in Anglo-Scottish politics.

A staunch Catholic, Margaret was prominent at the court of Queen Mary I, her cousin and life-long friend. Mary wanted Margaret to succeed her instead of the Protestant Elizabeth, her half-sister. It did not come to pass, and as soon as Elizabeth became queen in 1558, Margaret retired to her houses at Temple Newsam and Settrington in Yorkshire, which became a focus for Catholic intrigues. Her chief aim was for her son, Lord Darnley, to marry



Facing page, clockwise from top left: Margaret Tudor, sister of Henry VIII and mother of Margaret Douglas; Margaret's son, Lord Darnley, with his wife, Mary, Queen of Scots; Margaret's husband, Matthew Stewart, Earl of Lennox; Mary I. *This page:* The Lennox Jewel (circa 1571-8) is kept in the Palace of Holyroodhouse

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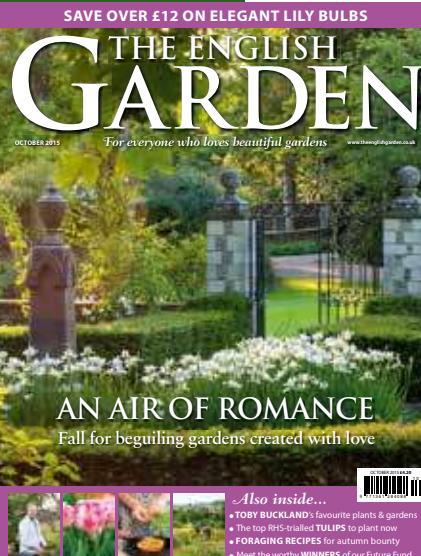


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Mary, Queen of Scots, a plan to which Elizabeth showed herself vehemently opposed. For her plotting Margaret endured a year under house arrest, and when Darnley went north without permission in 1565 and married Mary, Margaret ended up in the Tower again. She remained there until 1567, when Darnley's murder prompted Elizabeth to release her out of compassion.

Racked with grief, Margaret denounced Mary as a murderer. Later they were reconciled, probably after Margaret gained inside knowledge of what had really happened – a strong argument for Mary's innocence. Thereafter Margaret worked towards the succession of Mary and Henry's son (her grandson), King James VI of Scotland, to the English throne. But there was more tragedy in store for Margaret. In 1570 her beloved husband, Lennox, became regent of Scotland for James VI, but he was assassinated the following year, leaving Margaret a widow after 26 years of marriage.

In 1574 she plotted with another arch-intriguer, the redoubtable Bess of Hardwick, to organise the marriage of her younger son, Charles, to Bess's daughter, Elizabeth Cavendish, which again provoked Queen Elizabeth's wrath. Off Margaret went once more to the Tower, but she was soon released, and devoted her energies to

bringing up her granddaughter, Lady Arbella Stuart, in whom were now vested the Lennox claims to the throne.

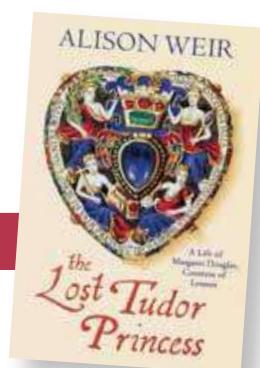
Margaret died in 1578. A few days beforehand she had dined with Elizabeth's court favourite, the Earl of Leicester, and there were unfounded rumours that he had poisoned her. Elizabeth allowed her a state funeral, and she was buried in Westminster Abbey, where a fine tomb, adorned with her painted effigy and weeping figures of her eight children, was built in her memory. Later, Mary, Queen of Scots, was laid to rest in the same chapel.

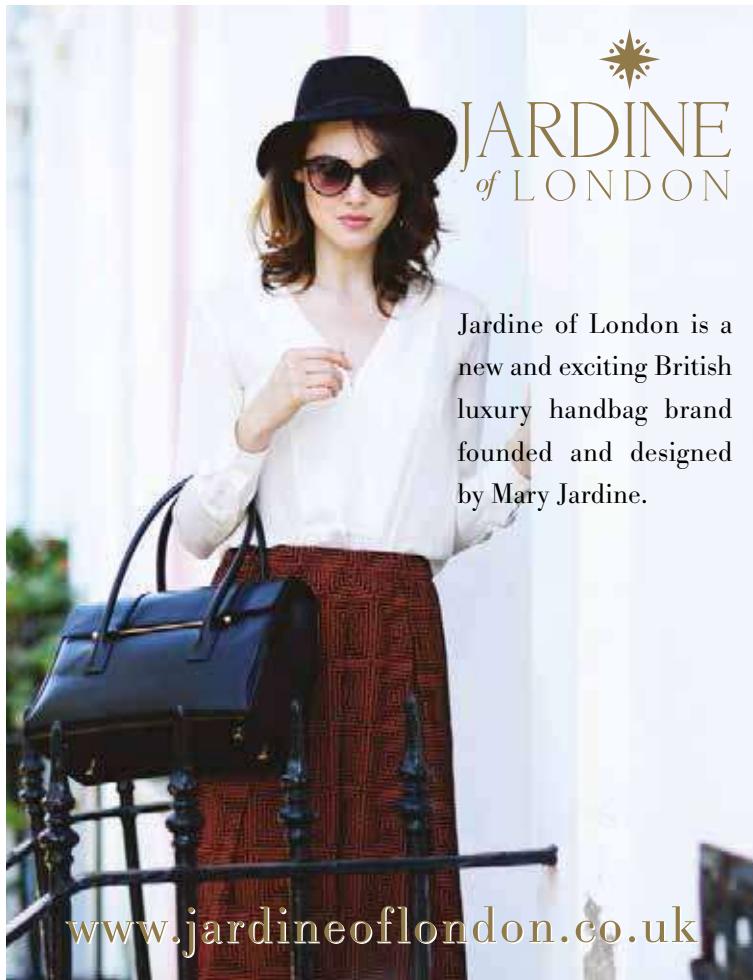
Margaret's tale spans five Tudor reigns, and is packed with intrigue, drama and tragedy. In an age in which women were expected to be insubordinate, and to occupy themselves only with domestic concerns, she stands out as a strong, capable and intelligent character who operated effectively – and fearlessly – at the highest levels of power, and who deserves to be better remembered. **B**

Above: The Tower of London, where Margaret Douglas was imprisoned three times

BUY THE BOOK

The Lost Tudor Princess: A Life of Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, by Alison Weir, is out now (Jonathan Cape, £20) and features the full story of the extraordinary life of Margaret Douglas.





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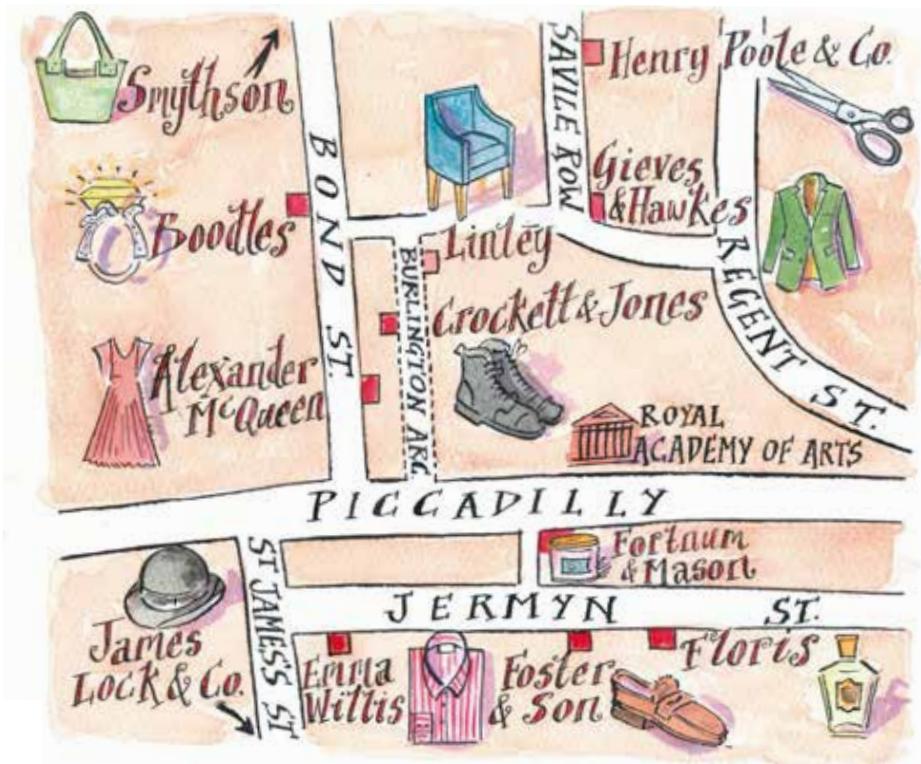
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WORDS **SALLY COFFEY AND EMILY PRINGLE**



Today London may be known for its wealth of shops, from luxury department stores to quirky boutiques, but it hasn't always been quite so well provided for – indeed before Queen Elizabeth I opened the Royal Exchange in 1571 Londoners had to make do with haggling at the city's crowded rat-infested markets.

The Royal Exchange changed all this. The brainchild of Sir Thomas Gresham, a merchant and financier who worked for King Edward VI and his half-sisters Queen Mary I and Queen Elizabeth I, this open-air piazza near Threadneedle Street in the City of London was created to bring London's financial trading in from the muddied streets, but also, to turn a profit, Gresham introduced retail businesses, which proved a huge success.

The Royal Exchange signalled a change in London's fortunes and soon other shopping areas began springing up, many of which remain largely unchanged today.

If you fancy finding out who invented the bowler hat and where the oldest bespoke shoemakers in the capital are, then follow our guide to some of London's most historic and exclusive shopping areas, all within easy walking distance of each other, and some of the brands operating there today.



JERMYN STREET

The first street to position itself as home to gentlemen's fashion, Jermyn Street was named after Henry Jermyn, Earl of St Albans, the man often heralded as being responsible for the development of the West End between the 1660s and 1680s after the Great Fire of 1666.

A fashionable address from the off, many esteemed people have called Jermyn Street, in the heart of upmarket St James's, home, including Sir Isaac Newton, British Prime Minister William Gladstone, and writer William Makepeace Thackeray.

With such wealthy residents, it was just a matter of time before proprietors offering the best wines, cigars, shoes, hats and perfumes moved in. By 1707 Fortnum & Mason, possibly the world's most luxurious department store, had opened the doors of its first shop, just round the corner on Piccadilly. ▶



Front page: One of the Burlington Beadles. Top: Fortnum & Mason. Above: The Royal Exchange



FOSTER & SON

London's oldest bespoke cobblers have been producing high-quality leather shoes, boots, cases, luggage and wallets at 83 Jermyn Street since the 1840s. The shoes are made using traditional handmade wood lasts, which give each pair a unique shape, and craftsmen can design shoes to suit any specification.

www.foster.co.uk



PHOTOS: © HEMIS/VISETBRITAIN/ERIC NATHAN/MS BRETHERTON/ALAMY



FLORIS

Floris, at number 89, has been operating since 1730, making it the oldest independent family perfumer in the world. It is the only appointed perfumer to Her Majesty The Queen, although its first Royal Warrant was actually as smooth pointed comb maker to King George IV. Sadly the company no longer makes combs, but it does produce some beautifully crafted shaving accessories and its perfumes and bath oils make wonderful gifts – you can even create your own scent.

www.florislondon.com

EMMA WILLIS

One of the newest additions to Jermyn Street is Emma Willis, which opened up shop in 1999 but stays true to the values of this historic street. Run by its namesake, the shop at number 66 sells luxury shirts, ties, boxer shorts and nightwear using Swiss and West Indian Sea Island Cotton, all made using traditional English shirt-making techniques in the company's Gloucester factory. You can also have a shirt tailor-made for you.

www.emmawillis.com



SAVILE ROW

In 1733 a new fashionable street was erected, just north of Piccadilly, on the whim of the spendthrift 3rd Earl of Burlington. Named Savile Street after the earl's wife, Lady Dorothy Savile, it later became known as Savile Row.

Attracted by the promise of wealthy clientele, soon whippmakers, tailors and cobblers of such prestige that they commanded Royal Warrants moved into the area around this salubrious street in Mayfair.

By the early 1800s, Savile Row had made a name for itself as the place to go for good quality bespoke gentlemen's tailoring and house frontages were altered to bring natural light into the tailors' working areas. ►

HENRY POOLE & CO (right)

Henry Poole's father, James, had already proven himself a quality tailor by making the uniforms of the officers' troops at the Battle of Waterloo.

Inheriting the company in 1846, Henry made the main entrance of his father's tailoring shop at 4-5 Old Burlington Street on the Savile Row side, earning himself the title of 'Founder of Savile Row' in the process. When creating a bespoke dinner jacket for the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VII), Henry is credited with having designed the tuxedo (later introduced to Tuxedo Park, New York).

www.henrypoole.com



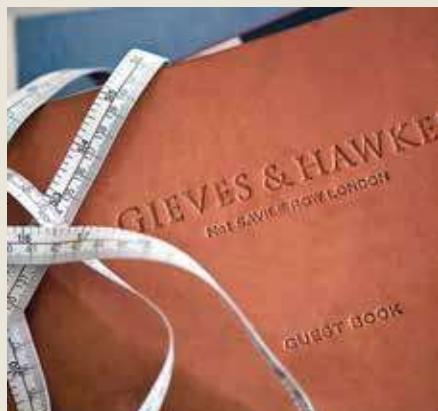
JAMES LOCK & CO

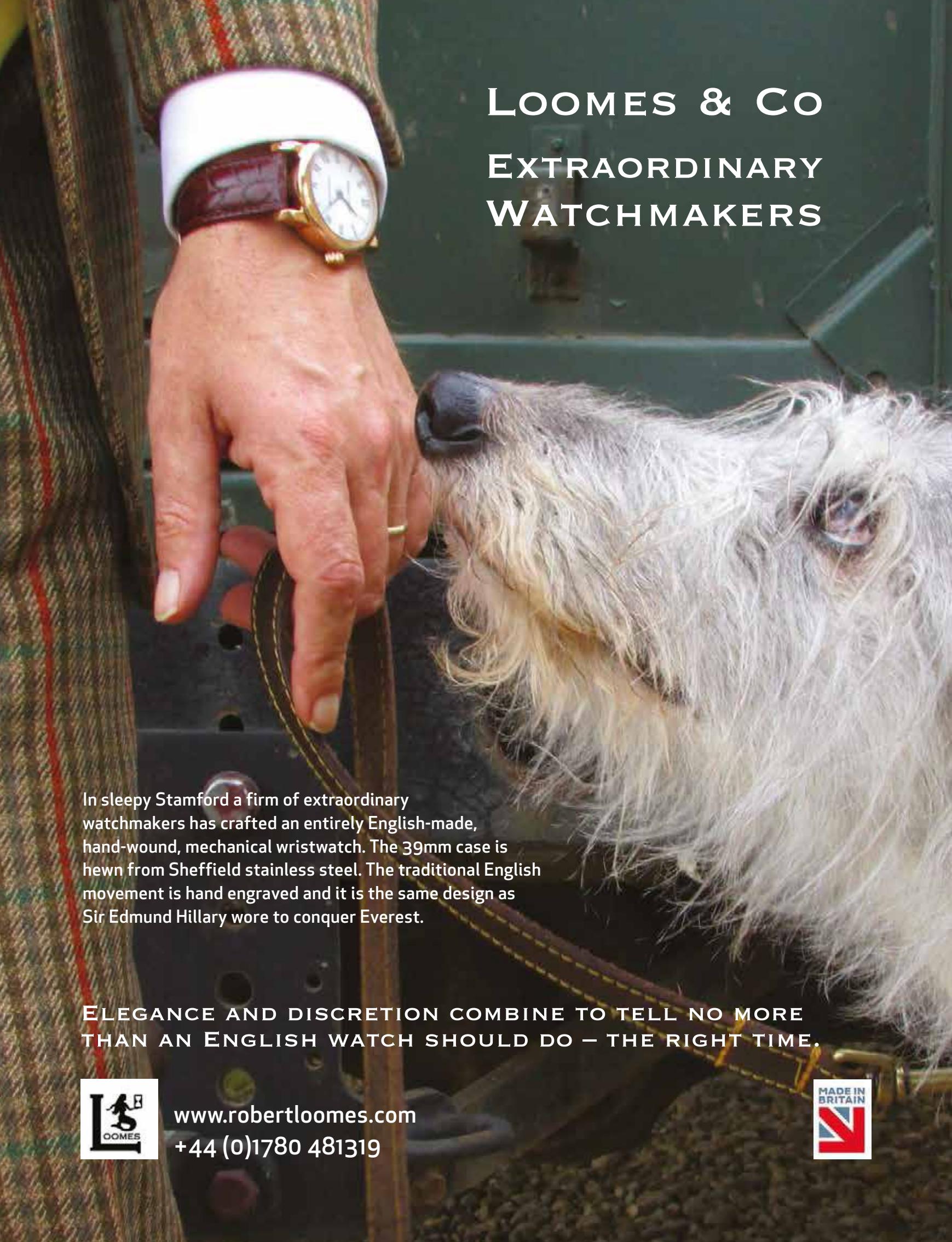
Though strictly speaking it's not actually based on Savile Row, hat makers James Lock & Co, founded in 1676, and located nearby at number 6 St James's Street, is responsible for a Savile Row icon: the bowler hat. Commissioned by farmer William Coke, the hat was designed to protect the heads of his gamekeepers from overhanging branches on his estate. Coke came to the shop to inspect the finished product himself by jumping on it. When it withstood his weight he bought it and the bowler hat is still called the Coke at Lock & Co to this day. www.lockhatters.co.uk

GIEVES & HAWKES

At 1 Savile Row you'll see the culmination of two heritage brands, which came together as recently as the 1970s, though they had both held Royal Warrants since the 18th century.

Today Gieves & Hawkes provides military dress for the British Royal Navy and the British Army, as well as dressing members of livery, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and HRH The Prince of Wales. For us mere mortals it also offers a great selection of timeless tailoring and accessories. www.gievesandhawkes.com





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BURLINGTON ARCADE

At 196 yards and opening in 1819, Burlington Arcade (left and below left) is perhaps the longest and oldest remaining shopping arcade in Britain. The arcade contains 40 specialist shops, many of which retain their original shop fronts, which focus on antique art, jewellery and silver.

The arcade is policed by Britain's smallest private police force, the Burlington Beadles, who are formally dressed (with top hats by Lock and Co) and extremely knowledgeable about London. In its early days the upper level of the arcade was known for hiding disreputable behaviour and the Beadles were assigned to remove all traces of bad conduct. As a result, to this day whistling, the opening of umbrellas and boisterous behaviour will result in a polite request to refrain.

In 1964 Sir Paul McCartney was excused from the whistling ban, when one of the Beadles realised who he was addressing and gave him lifetime exemption from the rule. McCartney, a regular visitor, still greets the Beadles with a brief whistle and a wink, to which the Beadles retort with a slight tilt of their hats. ▶

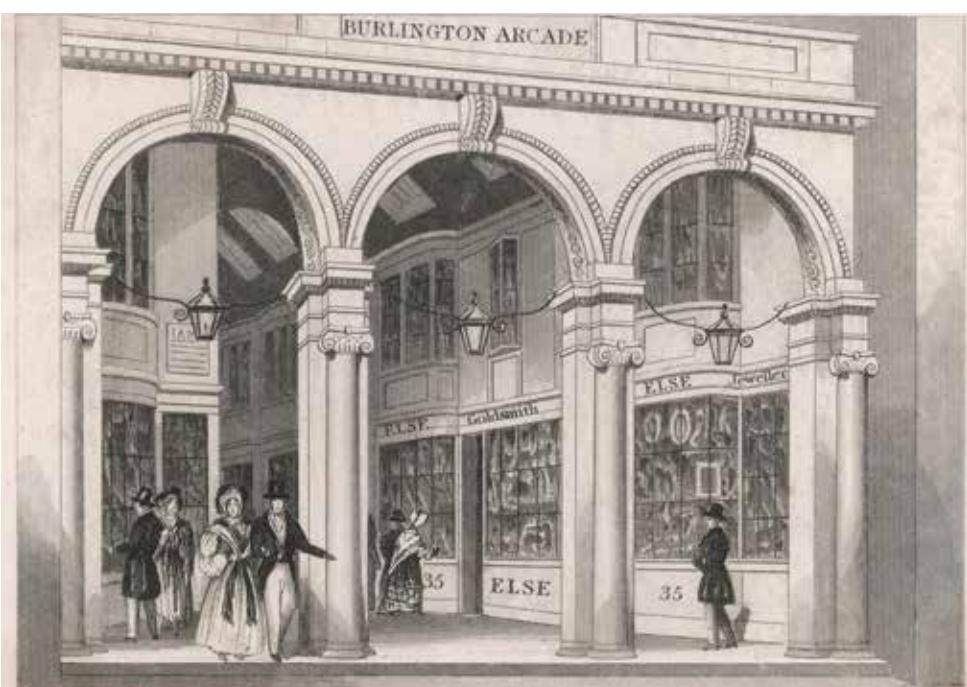
CROCKETT & JONES

Though it only opened its Burlington Arcade shop in 2001, this manufacturer of Goodyear-welted footwear actually began life in 1879 in the shoe capital of England, Northampton. During the Second World War, Crockett & Jones was ordered by the government to switch its production to make military footwear, of which it produced over one million pairs, massively contributing to the war effort.
www.crockettandjones.com



LINLEY

Founded in 1985 by Viscount Linley, the Queen's nephew, the company is renowned for producing fine British marquetry. The focus is on furniture but Linley also offers some beautifully crafted accessories and gifts. We love its 'Mini Ben' place card holders, handcast in bronze by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, or the Great Fire Matchbox Sleeve (below), to mark the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London in 2016.
www.davidlinley.com



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BOND STREET

London's Bond Street (above and right), founded in the early 18th century, has long been a playground for London's wealthiest and most elegant socialites.

The street is divided into two sections. Southern Bond Street is considered the 'old' part, having been converted from fields surrounding Clarendon House in the 1720s by Sir Thomas Bond. By the end of the century, Bond Street was a well-established shopping area for London's upper class.

Northern Bond Street was established approximately 14 years after the southern end and despite being the newer addition isn't quite as revered as its predecessor.

Bond Street offers plentiful designer clothing brands, fine jewellers and antique shops and it's also near to some of the most esteemed hotels and restaurants in London, including Claridge's and The Ritz. 



SMYTHSON

For high-end handbags (below), stationery and purses, pop into Smythson, which has been selling luxury leather goods from its Bond Street store for 125 years. Past customers include Vivien Leigh and Sir Winston Churchill and its most lavish stationery includes 24-carat gilded edges. You can even customise your purchases with monograms. www.smythson.com



ALEXANDER MCQUEEN

The late designer has left a lasting impression on British fashion: from his flagship on Savile Row he dressed the likes of Prince Charles and was named British Designer of the year four times. In 2011, Sarah Burton of Alexander McQueen designed the Duchess of Cambridge's wedding dress. www.alexandermcqueen.com

BOODLES

Proprietors of bespoke and fine diamond jewellery since 1798, nothing quite says class like Boodles. The company, which was started in Liverpool and was originally called Boodle & Dunthorne, designed the silver stand for one of HM The Queen's wedding cakes but only ventured to London in 2001. The New Bond Street store opened in 2007 and sells exquisite pieces of jewellery, and incredibly it's still family-run. www.boodles.com



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YORK'S SHAMBLES

Is this 900-year-old cobbled passage the prettiest street in Britain? It's certainly a contender, but its beginnings were far from fetching

WORDS ANDREW WHITE

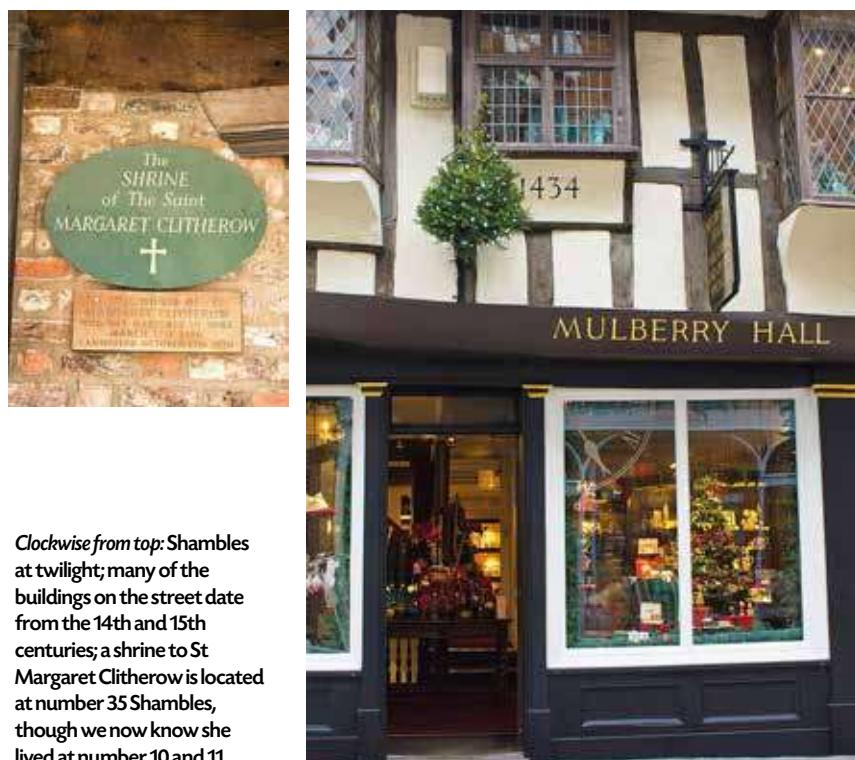
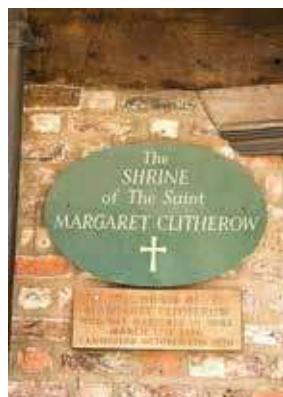
In a city with one of the largest Gothic cathedrals in northern Europe and the largest railway museum in the world, it might seem strange that so many of the 6.7 million visitors a year to York head straight to a street called Shambles, but that's until you experience its unique charm, character and history for yourself.

Shambles is generally regarded as the best-preserved medieval street in Europe. A mention in the *Domesday Book* means we know that York's oldest street dates back to at least 1086, although many of its buildings today were created in the late 14th and 15th centuries.

The name Shambles has nothing to do with the appearance of the street but is a shortened version of the medieval word 'Flesshammel' – meaning flesh bench – which was apt, as Shambles was the city's main hub for butchers. Many of the properties came complete with a slaughterhouse at the back to provide a constant supply of fresh meat, which would be hung outside the shops on the meat hooks that are still present on several of the buildings. Select cuts would also be displayed on the wide window sills, hence the term 'flesh bench'.

With the slaughtering of animals in the shops, the disposal of waste was a constant problem – particularly without modern-day drainage. To help, pavements were raised at either side to form a gully, and the butchers would wash away the blood and offal, twice a week, down the specially-designed sloped floors of their shops into the street. Unsurprisingly, these incredibly unhygienic conditions led to many outbreaks of cholera as well as a severe case of the Great Plague in the 17th century but it wasn't until the 20th century that proper drainage channels were installed.

It's often said that at some points the street is so narrow you can touch the houses on both sides with your arms ►



Clockwise from top: Shambles at twilight; many of the buildings on the street date from the 14th and 15th centuries; a shrine to St Margaret Clitherow is located at number 35 Shambles, though we now know she lived at number 10 and 11

Timeless Treasures

outstretched but you'll have to visit to see if your arms are long enough to reach. It's true that several of the roofs almost touch. This solved two problems: firstly, the overhanging design of the buildings protected the meat on the window sills and the hooks from the sun and, secondly, it prevented excessive weathering of the buildings made with wattle and daub (a mixture of mud, clay and twigs).

The most famous story to survive the annals of history of Shambles is that of Margaret Clitherow, the wife of one of the butchers in the street, who converted to Catholicism during the reign of the fiercely Protestant Queen Elizabeth I. Supported by her Protestant husband, Margaret gave shelter to travelling priests and conducted mass for local Catholics in her home. After being warned and imprisoned for her actions, she was condemned to death by pressing – crushed to death under a weight – at the tollbooth on the Ouse Bridge. A shrine to Margaret, who was canonised in 1970, is located at number 35 Shambles, once thought to be her home. However, we now know that she lived at number 10 and 11 Shambles.

Today, with its variety of cafés and shops, Shambles is a tourist attraction in its own right, as visited as York's ancient city walls. Instead of the 26 butcher shops you'd have found in 1872, the street is now one of the premier shopping areas in the city, with a wide selection of jewellery and antique shops. There are many distinctive features of the original buildings still to be found up and down the street – if you can stop long enough in the melee of visitors to take them all in. It might seem ironic that a street called Shambles could be considered Britain's prettiest street, but seeing is believing. ■



PHOTOS: © ROBERT HARDING WORLD IMAGERY/ALAMY/ROBERT BIRKBY/LOOP IMAGES/CORBIS

To take a video tour of York go to www.britain-magazine.com/yorkvideo



Top to bottom: The street is an easy walk from York Minster; the overhanging design of the buildings on Shambles protected the meat on the window sills

TRAVEL ESSENTIALS

GETTING THERE

By train: York railway station is on the East Coast Main Line with frequent services from London and Edinburgh. London is two hours away by Virgin Trains East Coast, with Shambles only a 15-minute walk from the station. www.virgintrainseastcoast.com

By car: Parking in York is difficult, so find the nearest out-of-city Park and Ride car park, and travel in by bus. York is approximately a four-hour drive from London.

WHERE TO STAY

For a unique experience, stay in the Guy Fawkes Inn, built on the very spot where the Gunpowder Plot instigator was born in 1570. This characterful pub boasts gas lamps and timber floors, with many of the rooms looking directly out on to York Minster, with some of the best views in the city. www.guyfawkesinnnyork.com

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.visityork.org

This photo: Celtic cross in Rosedale. Below: Beggar's Bridge at Glaisdale, in the North York Moors



Explore the glorious countryside of Yorkshire and visit off-the-beaten-track locations on an intimate guided tour

Historic York, with its medieval minster, cobbled streets and ancient walls attracts millions of visitors every year, but its surrounding countryside, comprising the North York Moors and the Yorkshire Dales – two of its three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – is no less inviting.

With Yorkshire Day Tours you can experience both town and country, offering you insight into the real Yorkshire. Tours on board 16-seater Mercedes mini coaches set off from the city centre each day, whizzing you off to scenic locations without the worry of driving.

The Yorkshire Dales Tour itinerary covers the best of its namesake national park, which is home to stone-built villages and stunning views. You'll travel through the famous Dales of Wensleydale, Bishopdale, Wharfedale and Nidderdale.

You'll pass through Masham, home of the warring breweries, before arriving at Grassington, a classic cobbled market town. There will also be time to visit Reeth, in the heart of the Dales, and admire Aysgarth Falls, which were made famous in Hollywood's *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*.

Less than 30 miles away from the Dales are the equally stunning North York Moors. The first stop



on the North York Moors Tour is the ancient market town of Pickering, gateway to the Moors.

The next stop is at Goathland, the moorland village that featured as Aidensfield in TV's *Heartbeat* – the railway station also made an appearance as 'Hogsmeade' in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*.

Lunch will be taken at Lealholm, described by *The Sunday Times* newspaper as 'the prettiest village

in Yorkshire', before heading back to the moorland where you can take in the picture-perfect village of Hutton-le-Hole before finishing with a breathtaking view over the Vale of York.

With York on the main East Coast mainline, with regular trains from London to Edinburgh, it's a great destination for your British holiday.

The Mountain Goat, a tour specialist that has been taking customers to the Lake District since 1972, started Yorkshire Day Tours in early 2015.

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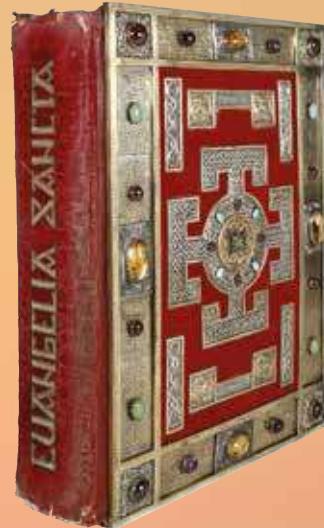




THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS

The oldest surviving version of the Gospels in the English language is one of Britain's most treasured masterpieces

WORDS CHRIS FAUTLEY



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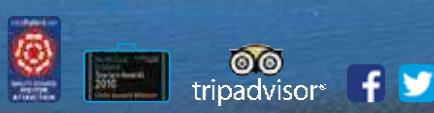
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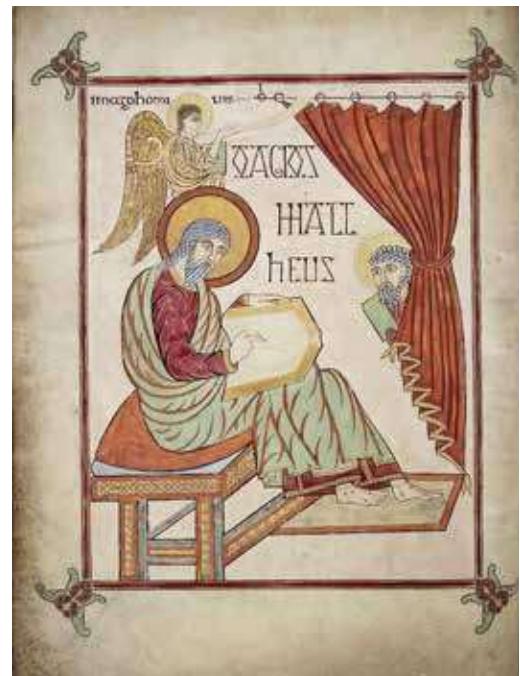
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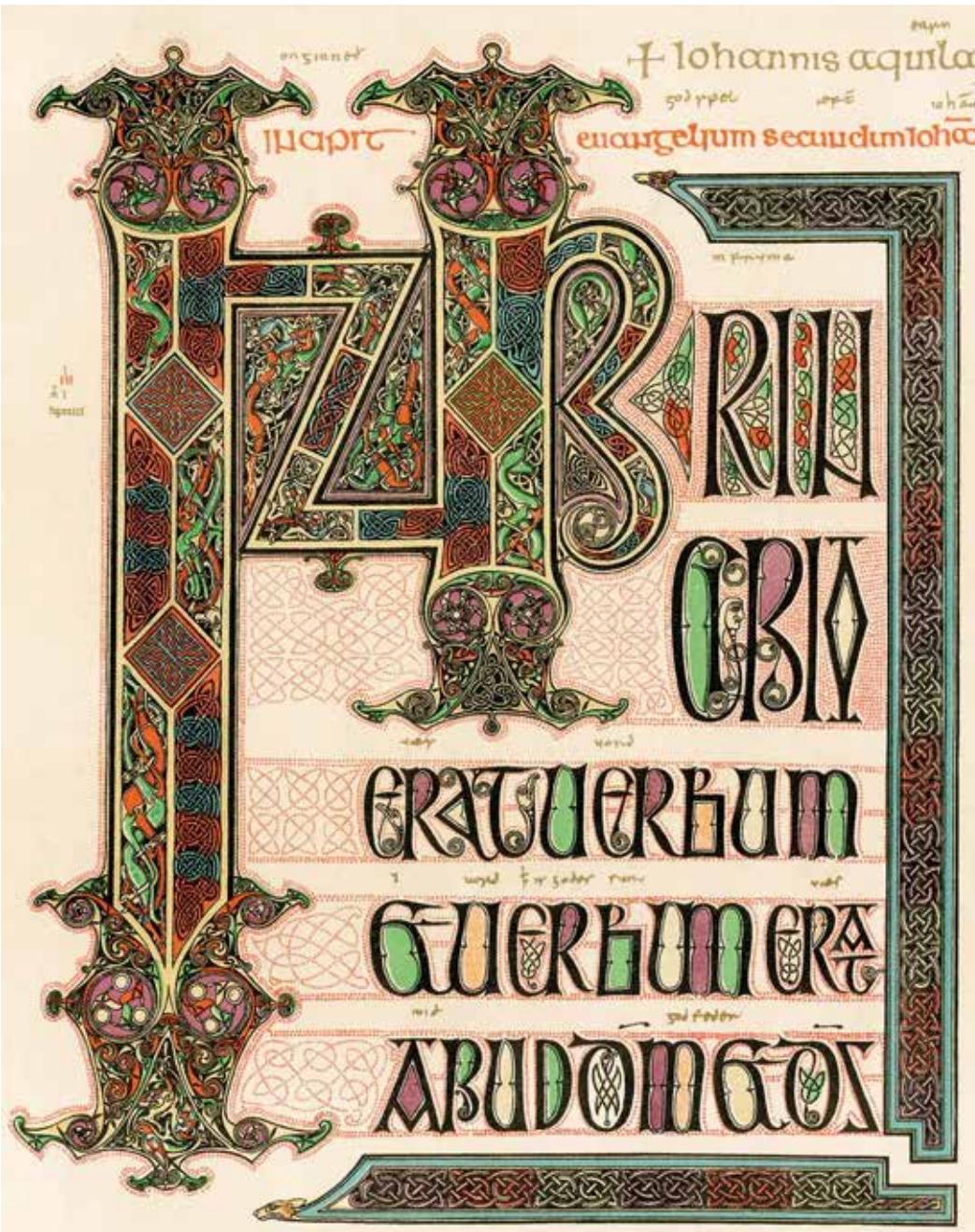


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It was one of the most culturally barren periods of Britain's history. The Romans had departed, leaving Britain open to attack from Viking invaders who left few clues about their way of life; invaders whose principal legacy was an intellectual vacuum. And violence. This, then, was the Dark Ages. Yet against all the odds, one of Britain's greatest literary treasures shines through the depths of this Stygian era.

The story of the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, a great illuminated Latin manuscript, commences shortly after the death of St Cuthbert in AD687. Cuthbert was Bishop of Lindisfarne, (also known as Holy Island), off the coast of Northumbria (modern-day Northumberland). He was feted for curing the plague, and on his death a cult following developed.

Cuthbert had been buried near the altar in Lindisfarne's church, but by AD698 it was felt his remains should be placed in a more elevated position to facilitate veneration.

When his body was exhumed it was found to be virtually uncorrupted, thus further enhancing Cuthbert's holy reputation. It is quite possible that the *Lindisfarne Gospels* were commissioned to mark this exhumation.

The Gospels' single volume comprises 259 leaves of vellum; writings and illustrations are variously presented as either single pages or double-page spreads. Within are the Gospels of Mark, John, Luke and Matthew – written in copperplate Latin, with an English translation between the lines. The translation was added during the 10th century by Aldred, provost of Chester-le-Street near Durham, where the Gospels were moved to circa AD883. Hence the Gospels are the oldest in the English language.

Aldred did much to confirm the Gospels' provenance by adding a colophon, or appendix, on the final page. In this he states that they were written "for God and for St Cuthbert," and that their author was Eadfrith, Cuthbert's

Opening page:
Lindisfarne Castle at dawn. *Clockwise, from top left:* St Luke appears in the Lindisfarne Gospels accompanied by his traditional symbol, a calf or young ox; the incipit page from the Gospel of St John; St Matthew appears with his traditional symbol, the figure of a man, with a second figure peering out from behind a curtain

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BRITAIN'S FINEST





successor as Bishop of Lindisfarne. They are unusual in that they were written and illustrated by the same person – it was more common for such works to be produced by a team of writers and illustrators.

Although we can never be sure how long it took to produce the Gospels, (estimates vary between five and 10 years), there can be little doubt that it was a laborious and time-consuming process. Eadfrith was, after all, bishop – with all the attendant duties of the role – yet the result was a masterpiece: there are very few pages that are not decorated or illuminated in some way.

The four Gospels are each presented in a similar format. First, after a brief introduction, there is a painting of the Evangelist in question. Next, there is a ‘carpet’ page – an entire page devoted to an intricately patterned illustration, resembling a Persian carpet. There follows the first page of the Gospel proper. Known as an *incipit* page, its opening words are lavishly decorated. Such is the extravagance of the decoration that in the Gospel of St Luke, the *incipit* page comprises just seven words. The 16 pages of canon table arcades are another feature the Gospels have in common. Comprising four columns set out in the manner

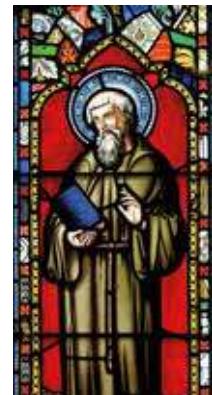
of a chancel arch, they tabulate which biblical passages are duplicated in the various Gospels.

While the pages of the manuscript are complete, their original binding has long vanished. However, Aldred’s colophon tells us that Billfrith, a hermit metalworker on Lindisfarne, decorated it. Aldred states that, “Billfrith... adorned it with gold and gems and gilt-silver, pure metal.” It must have been every bit as dazzling as the manuscript.

Top to bottom:
The ruins of
Lindisfarne Abbey,
Northumberland;
St Cuthbert as he
appears in his chapel
on Inner Farne Island

DID YOU KNOW?

- St Cuthbert died on Inner Farne, part of the Farne Islands, six miles southeast of Lindisfarne.
- It is estimated that up to 150 calfskins were required to produce the vellum on which the Gospels are written.
- Some of the artwork is set on a background of minute, red, lead dots – the *incipit* page of St Luke’s Gospel has more than 10,000.
- Throughout the Gospels, there are what appear to be incomplete areas of artwork. Some schools of thought suggest the Gospels were never finished.



Don't miss
historic Bamburgh
Castle, which overlooks
Lindisfarne and the
Farne Islands



PHOTOS © STUART FORSTER/ALAMY/BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD

Top to bottom:
Durham Cathedral,
during the city's
Lumiere festival,
where St Cuthbert's
shrine remains; the
1852 cover of the
Lindisfarne Gospels

Quite what happened to the original binding remains a mystery. Today, nevertheless, the Gospels are still bound in a manner befitting their status with silverwork and jewels; the cost was met in 1852 by the Bishop of Durham.

That Eadfrith was extremely talented is beyond doubt: it might reasonably be argued that his work was little short of revolutionary. For example, in sketching out the pages

it was customary to use some kind of hard-tipped stylus. Eadfrith, however, used a pointed piece of lead, unwittingly inventing the pencil. Similarly, another innovation of his was an early version of a lightbox: shining light through the vellum for tracing.

Finding a wide variety of colours to illustrate the Gospels must have taxed Eadfrith's ingenuity to the limit. Purples and blues, for example, were derived from lichens; yellow from the extremely insoluble arsenic trisulfide. Some dyes may even have come from the Mediterranean. There are also Roman and Greek influences throughout the design, as well as intricate

patterns based on contemporary jewellery and fretwork, and the flora and fauna that surrounded him.

The Gospels, however, did not lead a peaceful life. The monks of Lindisfarne were not immune to the increasingly turbulent age in which they lived. By the beginning of the 9th century, the island had already suffered Viking raids; in AD875 the monks fled Lindisfarne, taking the Gospels and Cuthbert's relics with them. They first went to Chester-le-Street in AD883, then in AD995 moved to Durham – where Cuthbert's shrine remains to this day.

The whereabouts of the Gospels between the Dissolution and the early 17th century is unknown, but we do know they were acquired shortly after by Robert Bowyer, Keeper of Records in the Tower. By 1613, they were in the hands of Sir Robert Cotton – antiquary, book collector and MP. It was his collection that formed the early stages of a library at the British Museum in 1753, which merged with the British Library in 1973, where the *Lindisfarne Gospels* remain one of Britain's greatest literary treasures. ■



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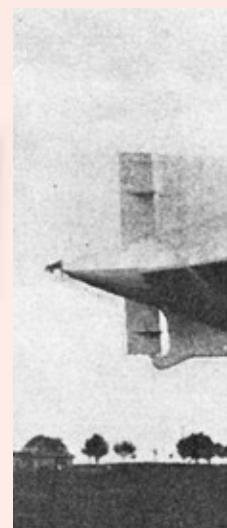
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THE FIRST *Blitz*

A quarter of a century before Hitler dispatched his Luftwaffe to attack London, British citizens experienced a Blitz during the First World War

WORDS AND PHOTOS IAN CASTLE



The rapid descent to war experienced in the hot summer of 1914 alerted scaremongers in Britain to the possibility of immediate aerial bombardment of London and other major industrial cities. The publicity and propaganda surrounding the development of Germany's fleet of airships had spread far and wide, and the spectre of these great leviathans of the air sowing their seeds of death and destruction in the streets of London suddenly became very real.

Two days after Britain declared war on Germany, the editor of *The Times* newspaper reported that the enemy boasted a force of 11 airships serving with their

armed forces but, he claimed reassuringly, only two were capable of reaching Britain.

The following day, 7 August, preparations for the air defence of London began when a single, unarmed aircraft took up station at Hendon, a northwestern suburb of the city. Then, the next day, the Admiralty added to the defence by assigning three 1-pounder 'pom-pom' guns to the anti-aircraft duties in Whitehall, close to the seat of government.

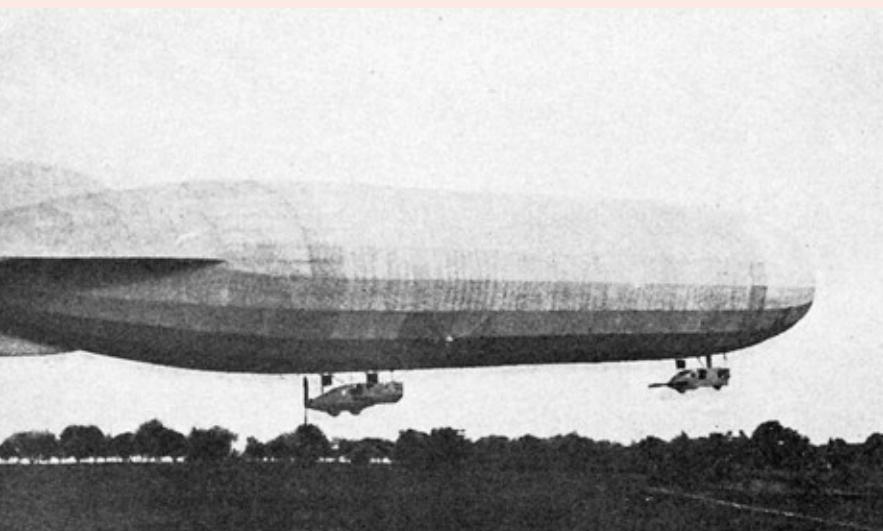
But no attack materialised. In fact, almost 10 months would pass before German airships finally appeared over London. Yet Britain still had little answer to the threat, and not until the late summer of 1916 could the armed forces offer a serious response.

LONDON'S FIRST ZEPPELIN RAID

Shortly after 11pm on 31 May 1915, Zeppelin LZ 38 appeared unannounced over Stoke Newington in north London. The commander, Erich Linnarz, later described the tense moment as he prepared to release the first bombs on the capital: "My finger hovered on the button that electrically operated the bombing apparatus. Then I pressed it. We waited. Minutes seemed to pass before, above the humming song of the engines, there rose a shattering roar... A cascade of orange sparks shot upwards, and a billow of incandescent smoke drifted slowly away to reveal a red gash of raging fire on the face of the wounded city."



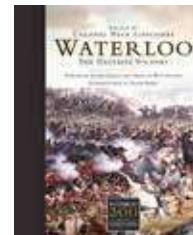
Clockwise from far left:
Devastation in Covent Garden after a raid; Friedrich Wenke reported that the initial bombs from Zeppelin L 10 fell between Blackfriars and London Bridge, as recorded in this German illustration, but Wenke was wrong: his bombs fell in the great reservoirs of the Lea valley; a Vickers 3-pounder quick-firing gun; the driver of this bus was killed by a bomb along with eight passengers; Zeppelin L 10



The first bomb fell on Alkham Road, the next in Chesholm Road, then Dynevor Road before LZ 38 steered over Nevill Road. An incendiary bomb crashed through the roof of an outbuilding at the back of the Nevill Arms, but failed to ignite. Two houses further on, at number 27, another incendiary smashed through the roof causing a tremendous conflagration. Alfred West, the 26-year-old son of the owner, suffered burns to his face. The fire was eventually extinguished by the police and neighbours as LZ 38 continued its path of destruction. **B**

For more on the bombing of London in WWI see Ian Castle's book, *The First Blitz* (14.99, Osprey Publishing).

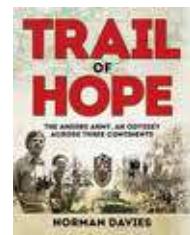
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*O*n the next issue of BRITAIN...

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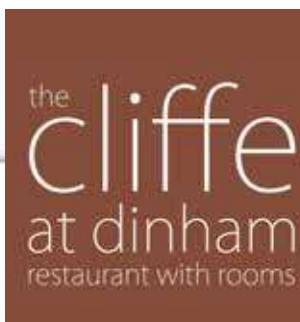
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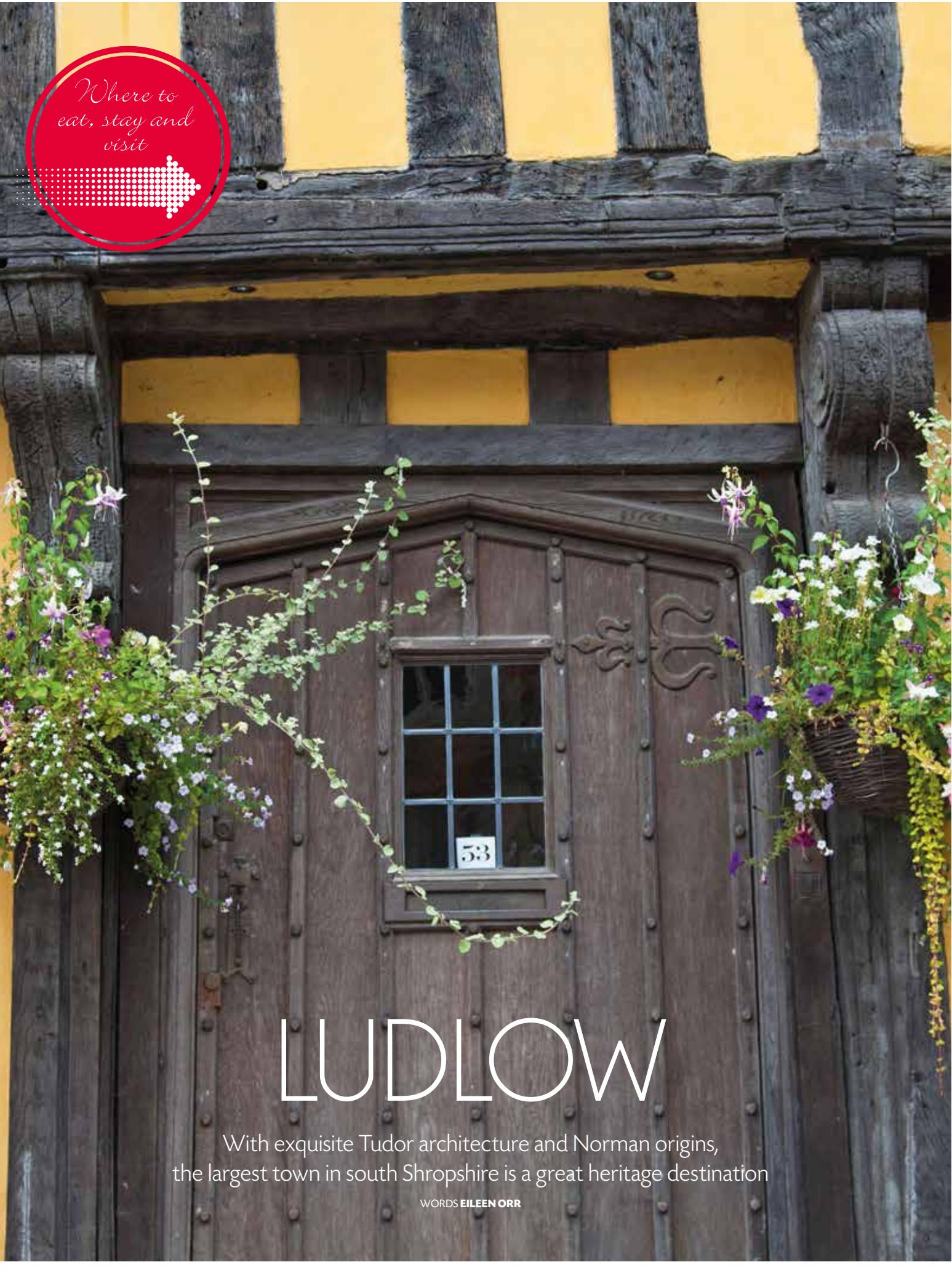


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Where to
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visit



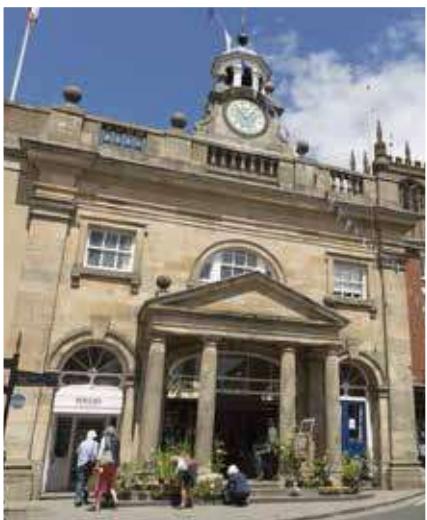
LUDLOW

With exquisite Tudor architecture and Norman origins, the largest town in south Shropshire is a great heritage destination

WORDS EILEEN ORR

DON'T
MISS

ST LAURENCE'S CHURCH, WHICH IS TESTIMONY TO THE TOWN'S PROSPERITY THROUGH THE AGES. NOTE ITS MEDIEVAL WINDOWS AND CARVED MISERICORDS AND CLIMB THE TOWER FOR PANORAMIC VIEWS



Above, from left: The Buttercross with St Laurence's Church in the background; Ludlow Castle offers views across the Shropshire countryside

Dress people in period costume and you'd be forgiven for thinking you'd stumbled on to a Hollywood film set, so quintessentially old world is Ludlow. With its winding streets and alleys, pretty cottages and quirky shops, this little parcel of historic Britain, wrapped in a ribbon of river and sealed with a castle, has nestled in its south Shropshire valley close to the Welsh border for nearly 900 years.

With its 11th-century street pattern still intact and its historic core a conservation area harbouring over 450 listed buildings, though strictly speaking not a city, Ludlow is one of England's most beautifully preserved market towns.

Founded shortly after the Norman Conquest of 1066, when first the castle was built then the town planned, Ludlow prospered with the manufacturing of

wool and cloth and by the 16th century had become a major administrative centre governing Wales and the border counties.

Now better known for having one of England's finest thoroughfares (Broad Street), a thriving food scene and a busy calendar of events, Ludlow could certainly never be accused of being stuck in aspic.

Packed with neat Georgian terraces and medieval timberframe properties



PHOTOS: © JOHN WARBURTON-LEE/PHOTOGRAPHY TRAVEL PICTURES LTD; © IAN G DAGNALL; © GREG BALFOUR/EVANS/CW IMAGES; CONVERY FLOWERS/REAL IMAGE/ALAMY ILLUSTRATION: © MICHAEL HILL



CUT-OUT-AND-GO GUIDE: LUDLOW



Below, from far left:
Terraced cottages in a residential street in Ludlow; game butchers in the 'larder of Shropshire'; striking Tudor buildings abound

in historically-accurate shades, Ludlow's inherent architecture is as natural and organic as the food phenomenon that brought about its fresh new status.

Dubbed the 'larder of Shropshire' and the 'food capital of Britain' at one point when it boasted more Michelin-starred restaurants than anywhere else outside London, the bustling market town has capitalised on its locally grown comestibles to great acclaim.



GETTING THERE

Ludlow is on the direct line from Holyhead to Cardiff; from London Paddington, change at Newport; from Birmingham change at Shrewsbury; connect at Crewe or Manchester from the north; at Bristol from the south-west.

If you're driving, Ludlow is on the A49 between Shrewsbury and Hereford. There are three pay-and-display car parks in the town centre and Ludlow Park and Ride is easily accessed from the A49. For details and bus information call Traveline, which covers Shropshire, on 0871 200 2233.

WHERE TO STAY

Choose from oodles of individual historic and country house-style hotels, character guest houses, B&Bs and cottages.

The Feathers Hotel, with its world-famous timber facade, built in 1619, has 40 rooms. Dominating Corve Street, the original feather motif (the symbol of the Prince of Wales) can still be seen in the gables.

Across town near the river and castle is Dinham Hall, the epitome of a grand Georgian family home with 13 rooms. Silver Pear Apartments, a historic 13th-century building once owned by the Lord of Ludlow, offers self-catering above a gorgeous shop of the same name in the centre of town.

For more accommodation inspiration visit www.ludlow.org.uk, or contact Ludlow Visitor Information Centre, Assembly Rooms, 1 Mill St, which is open from Monday to Saturday, 10am to 8pm, on 01584 875053.

WHERE TO EAT

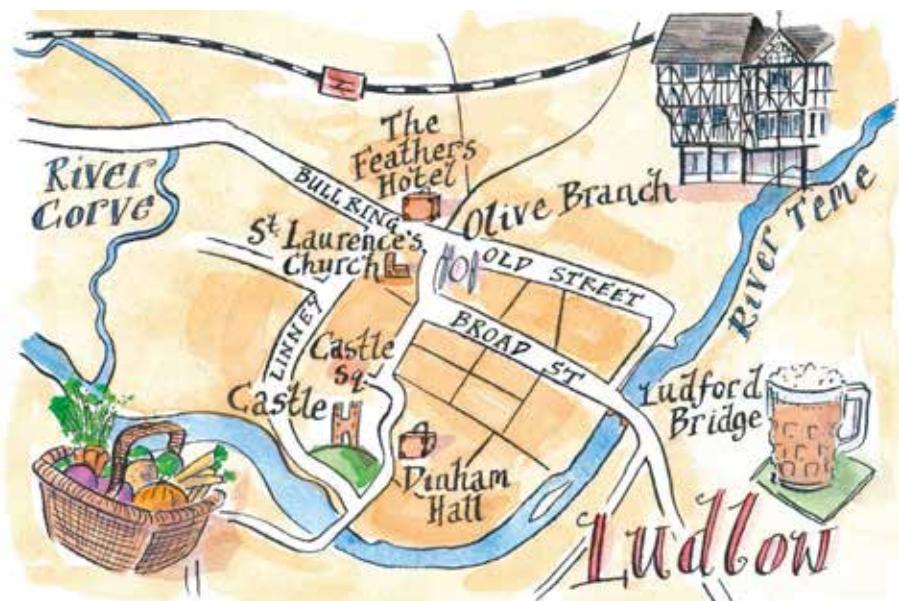
Eating well is easy in the delicious profusion of cafés, bars, bistros, delis and market stalls in and around the town.



The Olive Branch, Old St, is a local favourite with counter service by day and a full candle-lit table service at night. www.theolivebranchludlow.co.uk

Cicchetti, 10 Broad St, is an Italian bar/deli specialising in (what else?) cicchetti – tapas-style dishes in the cosy, cave-like bacaro tradition of Venice. www.ludlowcicchettibar.wordpress.com

Alternatively, try Ludlow Pantry, 10 High St, a mini offshoot of the out-of-town Ludlow Food Centre emporium, which specialises in handmade food with lots of flavour. www.ludlowpantry.co.uk



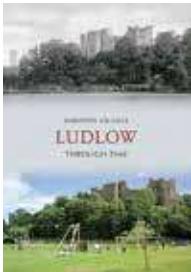
CUT-OUT-AND-GO GUIDE: LUDLOW



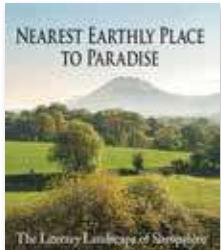
■ **DISCOVER** a world of specialist independent shops, including The Bindery, 5 Bull Ring, for exquisite leather-bound books, beautiful handmade cards and facsimiles of old prints. Period House Shop, 141 Corve St, is good for authentic replicas of vintage home items. www.trevorloyd.co.uk/thebinderyshop www.periodhouseshops.com

■ **JOIN** one of the guided walks with the Ludlow Historical Research Group, or to do your own tour, cross the river at Dinham Bridge, turn left, cross back into town at Ludford Bridge and go up Broad St through Broad Gate, the last remaining of Ludlow's seven medieval gateways. www.ludlowhistory.co.uk

Book bag



Ludlow through Time by Dorothy Nicolle (Amberley, £14.99)



Nearest Earthly Place to Paradise by Margaret Wilson (Merlin Unwin, £20)

■ **VISIT** Ludlow Racecourse, a small, friendly course with an Edwardian flavour. Racing records go back to 1729, though 14th-century soldiers used to bring their horses here to train. www.ludlowracecourse.co.uk

■ **EXPERIENCE** the Welsh Marches, the region around the border with Wales. Ludlow is a great base for exploring the natural landscape, or visit Stokesay Court (www.stokesaycourt.com), the filming location of the movie *Atonement* (pre-booked tours by appointment only); Ironbridge Gorge, a UNESCO World Heritage Site; or the Severn Valley Railway – all less than an hour's drive from Ludlow.

■ **INDULGE** yourself at Mr Underhill's, Ludlow's only Michelin-starred restaurant with rooms, which offers an eight-course taster dinner menu for a set price, from Wednesday to Saturday, booking essential. www.mr-underhills.co.uk



Live like a local

Charles Monteith, 47, a butcher, married with two sons, and a keen outdoorsman

As a butcher at DW Walls, which specialises in rare breed meats and is home to the 'real' Ludlow sausage, a 90-year-old secret recipe:
* I've lived and worked in Ludlow all my life and wouldn't want to be anywhere else. I love that it's safe, that there's a real strong sense of community.

* In my spare time I love mountain biking in the woods, in Mortimer Forest, where there are also some great walking trails.

* I also love fishing in the River Teme or the fish pools at Froggatts' Farm for carp and the good fishing competitions.

www.localtoludlow.org.uk

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HOMAGE TO A SHROPSHIRE LAD

Look out for the memorial to famous local poet AE Housman at St Laurence's

Award-winning chefs may move on but the emphasis remains on quality food, as traditional butchers, greengrocers, delicatessens, cafés and restaurants continue to create a gastronomic buzz and Castle Square presents dazzling foodie theatre twice a month in the form of a market teeming with fresh produce grown within 30 miles. Ludlow was also the first town in England to join the Slow Food Movement, an international network that started in Italy to rediscover regional cooking, showcase artisan producers, safeguard local cuisines, protect rare breeds and promote cooking skills.

But Ludlow isn't just about food. Culinary cornucopia aside, this charming historic town does have other attractions to relish. Quaint, elegant and beautifully kept, it's full of little shops and businesses, yet also very residential. Think *Lark Rise to Candleford* meets Jane Austen for a sense of its genteel atmosphere. Blue plaques everywhere highlight Ludlovian heritage, with one referring to nearby Downton Castle, possible inspiration for the TV drama. Here every building has a story to tell, and the River Teme that surrounds the town is a joy. □

For more on Shropshire and the Welsh borders go to www.britain-magazine.com





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YOUR LETTERS

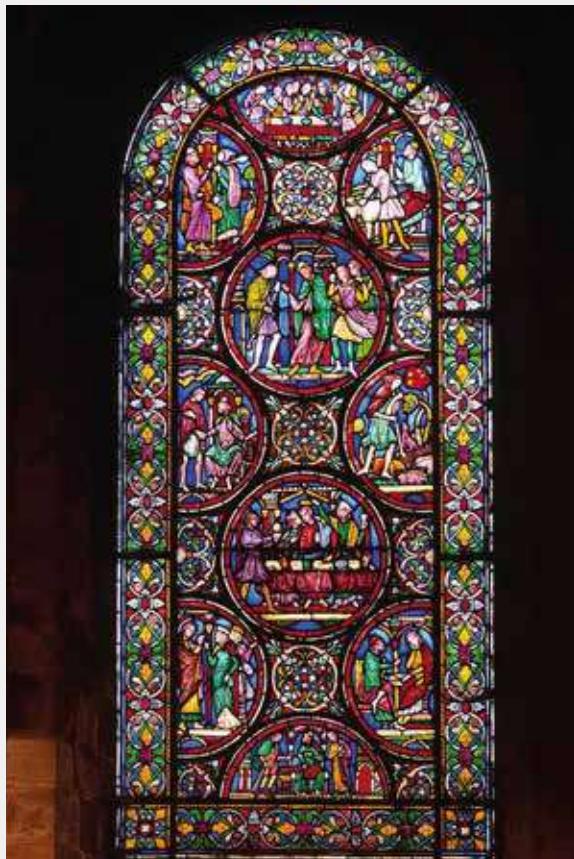
Get in touch with your views about the country, your travels and the magazine

OUR FAVOURITE LETTER ROMANTIC MEMORIES

Your September (Volume 83, Issue 4) issue evoked a romantic memory of my first visit to Ely Cathedral in 1974. I met an Englishman from Cambridge and our courtship moved quickly. David, wanting to show me the wonders of his shire, took me to see Ely. As we stood admiring the long nave, I asked if we might be married there. He replied, "Actually, that's a good idea. We will know each other better by the time we reach the altar." But another stole my heart, my husband John. We visited Ely in 2011 and no regrets.

Mimi G Kimbrough, Vancouver, Washington

❖ Our favourite letter wins this gorgeous Christmas gift bag (£25) from Bettys of Harrogate, containing a tin of Bettys Tea Room Blend tea bags, Bettys Café Blend coffee, milk chocolate, almonds and a delicious portion of Christmas cake. www.bettys.co.uk



SEASONAL STAYS

My wife and I plan to spend Christmas in England. Are there any packages that feature manor houses or small village hotels outside London offering three to five-day Christmas programmes? *Yolan Laporte, Fairfax, Virginia, USA*

BRITAIN REPLIES: You're in luck Yolan – turn to page 43 for our round-up of cosy Cotswold inns, the perfect places to hide away this winter, with roaring fires and four-poster beds aplenty.

For more of a tour, try Viator, which offers Christmas itineraries to the Cotswolds, Oxford, Windsor and Bath. To find out about this and other festive events go to www.britain-magazine.com/christmas2015

@UGustafsson
We climbed the stairs of the Sheldonian Theatre last week, the views were spectacular

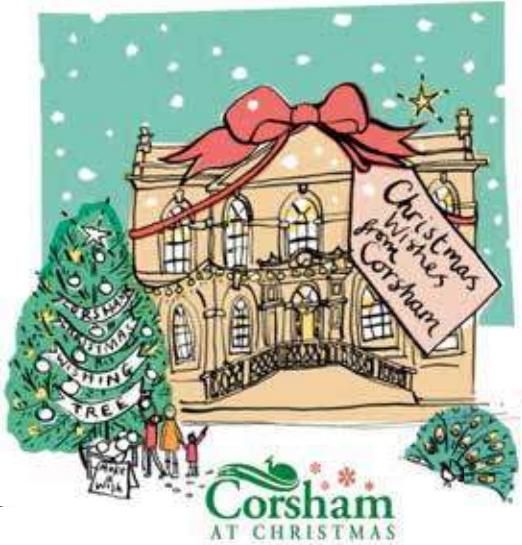
PERFECT DAY IN EDINBURGH

Your article on the Royal Yacht Britannia (Volume 83, Issue 4) brought back happy memories. In 2013 my husband and I were married in the Leith Registrar's Office, close to where the Royal Yacht is moored. We had a fun reception in the Whiski Bar on the Royal Mile, then the Tattoo rounded off a perfect day. The next day we toured the Royal Yacht enjoying the beautiful rooms and memorabilia.

Celia Chesney, Perth, Western Australia



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Saffron Walden Town Council

D-DAY MUSEUM

Portsmouth's D-Day Museum is Britain's only museum dedicated solely to covering all aspects of the D-Day landings in Normandy, France, on 6 June 1944.

D-Day was a turning point in the Second World War, and a moment when the course of world events depended on the Allied troops taking part.

Find out more about what you can see in the museum's displays, including the Overlord Embroidery plus full details of our opening times at ddaymuseum.co.uk

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Portsmouth
the great waterfront city



British soldiers on Southsea seafront, about to board a landing craft to go to Normandy, June 1944.

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COUNTRY**

Image courtesy of EH

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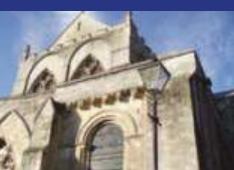
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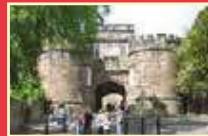
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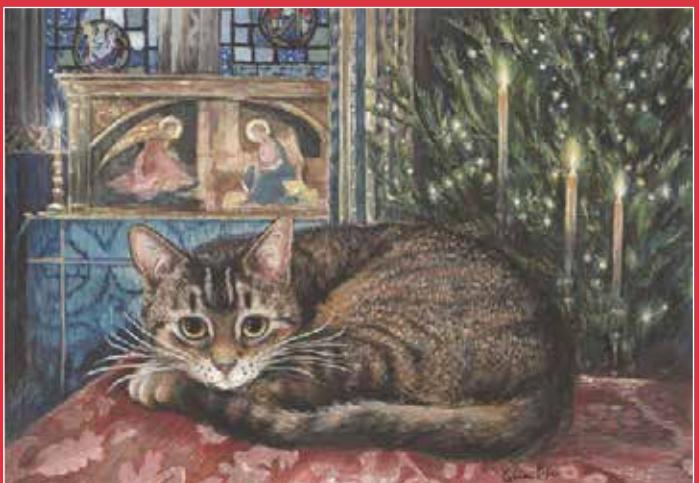
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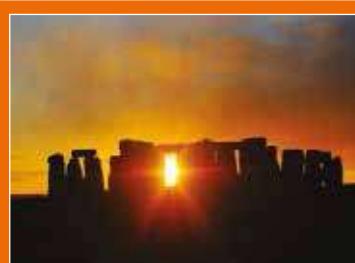
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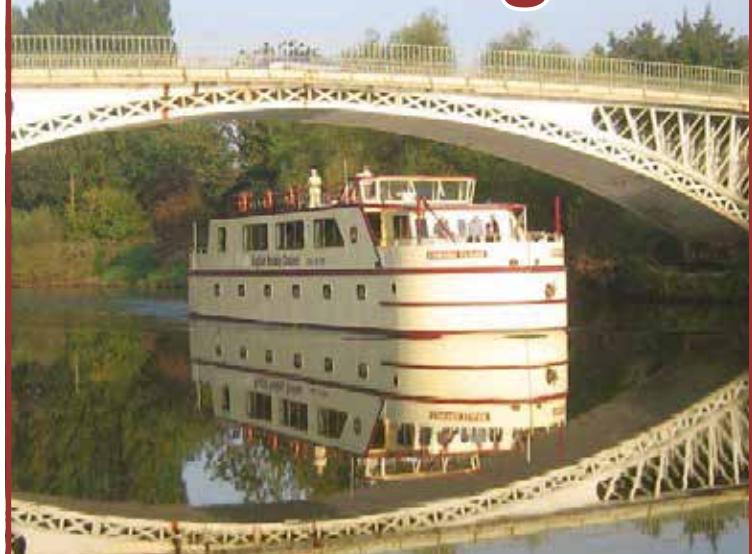
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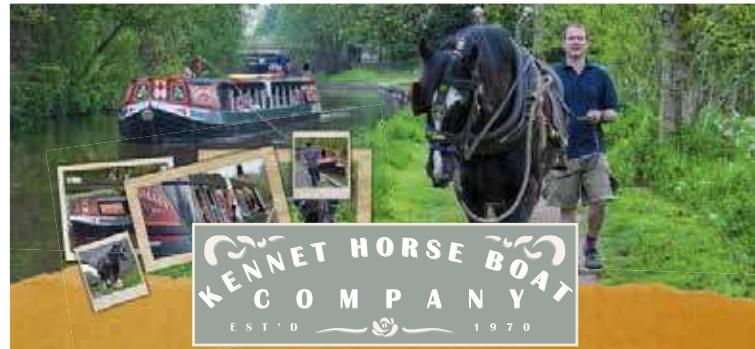
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Royal Rights

Historically the Royal Family has bestowed certain privileges and prerogatives on its subjects, ranging from the peculiar to the downright bizarre, many of which still technically stand today

Under a decree issued by King Charles II, six ravens must be held in the Tower of London at all times. According to legend, if the ravens leave, the Tower and the kingdom will fall and therefore, as insurance, the Raven Master keeps chicks on site.

However, sometimes the privileged have to give something in return. For instance, every Royal Navy ship that moors alongside Tower Pier must deliver a barrel of rum to the Constable of the Tower of London in a ceremony known as the Constable's Dues.

Of course, royals can always make exceptions: Lord Kingsale is the only person who doesn't have to take his hat off in front of HM The Queen. His lordship is Premier Baron of Ireland and he owns the privilege (which legend has it was granted by King John to the baron's ancestor, John de Courcy) of wearing his hat in the royal presence – a right that was asserted by John, Baron Kingsale, at Dublin Castle before King George IV in August 1821.

Kingsale also has the privilege of having a cover laid for him at the royal table at coronations and all other state occasions.

The distribution of Maundy money is well known (though less that it involves the gifting in denominations of one penny, two pence, three pence, and four pence) but, as a means of collecting

rather than giving, the royals use some singular methods when it comes to rent. The Queen's Remembrancer gathers a symbolic debt of six horseshoes, 61 nails and two knives in rent for Her Majesty, who also receives an annual rent of £1.79 from Sark in the Channel Islands. And, in return for the tenure of Bury House, Sir Charles Mill had to give King George III a brace of milk-white greyhounds each time the king entered the New Forest. He always kept a litter in readiness.

Historically, a levy was paid to the lord of the manor for the privilege of allowing pigs to forage for acorns in a forest. Indeed, this practice, which is called pannage, still takes place each autumn in the New Forest. Meanwhile, up in Scotland, the Dukes of Atholl hold their estate at Blair Atholl on the condition they present a white rose to the sovereign at each visit. But things get even easier for the rent payers of the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust. For all the empty land, islands and rocks within the isles, Prince Charles is paid annually the sum of... one daffodil.

Adam Jacot de Boinod is the author of *The Meaning of Tingo and Other Extraordinary Words from Around the World*, published by Penguin Books, and the creator of the iPhone app *Tingo*, a quiz on interesting words.

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